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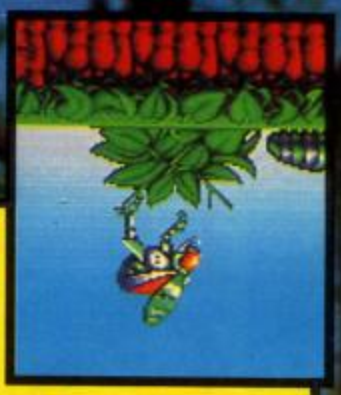
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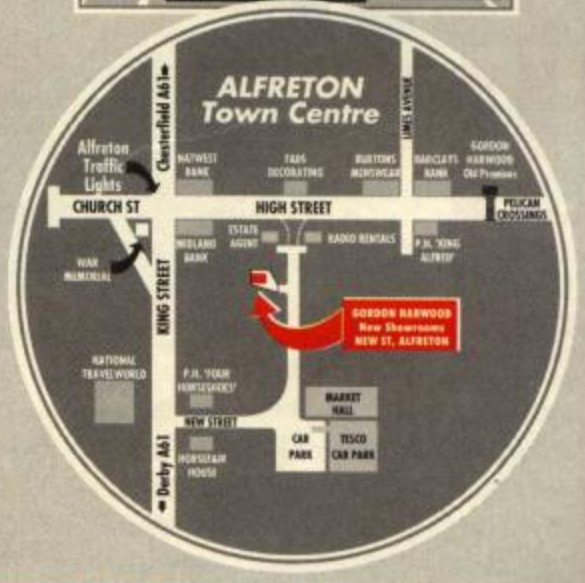
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ZZAP!'S NEW REVIEWER

Warren (Wozza) Lapworth hails from Northfield in Birmingham, although he's been 'living' in Ludlow for over two years. Prior to ZZAP! he's mostly been writing reviews for Newsfield's multi-format mag, *THE GAMES MACHINE*, but also in the horror, fantasy and sci-fi worlds of *FEAR*. Becoming our latest reviewer is something of a homecoming for Warren because in his early days at Newsfield he helped out with ZZAP! reviews.

He's owned a Commodore 64 for nearly six years and his favourite games include *Wizball* ('not that I've ever understood the colour-mixing method'), *Ghosts 'N' Goblins* ('a brilliant conversion and awesomely playable'), *Bruce Lee* ('the first game I played to death') and *Mega Apocalypse* ('psycho shoot-'em-up at its best'). He doesn't own an Amiga but expresses a preference for *Wicked* ('a Gothic blaster! weird!'), *Venus The Flytrap* ('highly addictive, Venus is a classic sprite') and *Xenon II* ('a real rad shmup — ah yeah!').

Apart from alcohol, Warren spends most of his 'spare' (ie FEAR's — Ed) cash on comics and graphic novels — he reviews a selection of them for *Graphic Detail*, his comics column in FEAR. His favourite titles include *Daredevil*, *Akira*, *Excalibur*, the *Plastic Forks* limited series, *She-Hulk* and the various Dark Horse Comics *Aliens* titles.

Warren has been trying to play guitar for years but hasn't succeeded. His favourite bands include The Icicle Works, Joy Division, Depeche Mode, Clan Of Xymox, Dead Can Dance and Win ('but not Wynne!').



A BLOCKBUSTER ISSUE!

One hundred pages, a massive Megatape with three games and a demo, a new reviewer, a completely new design, loads of features but still no space for an editorial. Well, not a big one anyway! In brief I'm back, the Scorelord has gone on his summer hols, and our next issue is going to be even better. (Is it possible?)

Stuart Wynne

GOING FOR GOLD!



★ **US Gold's victorious footie team (11-3 Leisuresoft, 9-0 Ocean). Let's hope they're as impressive in their day job: converting Line Of Fire, E-SWAT, UN Squadron and Strider II — 'No limits, no mercy, no surrender'. Strider is based on an original US Gold game idea, which CAPCOM liked so much they're making a coin-op version!**

TO *RAZE*, YOUR ATTENTION

Yippee! Newsfield (prestigious publishers of ZZAP!) are launching a new magazine to replace *The Games Machine*. The new title is called *Raze* and is dedicated to providing all the latest news and reviews on consoles (including handhelds) and 16-bit computers. It's going to be even hotter than the summer weather: look out for the first brain-burning issue in your newsagents now!

RAZE

A NEW ARMCHAIR SPORT?

Remember seeing all those weird minority sports on Channel 4? You know the sort: water polo, beach volleyball, amateur quilt-making, badger-baiting (are you sure about this? — Ed) etc. Well, computer gaming could be the next 'sport' to get the TV treatment. **Sunday Productions** have already made a 'test demo' for Channel 4 who are contemplating a 13-week series, probably starting in September '91. The planned programmes will feature competitions on various styles of game, including shoot-'em-ups and, ironically, sports sims.

ENTER FIRST INTO BATTLE... LAST TO LEAVE

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AMAZING MULTI-DYNAMIC MEGA- COMPILATION 3 COMPLETE GAMES, ONE SUPERB DEMO ZZAP! MEGATAPE TEN

The latest, and greatest ZZAP! Megatape has arrived. A humongous compilation of compulsive action incorporating three whole games and a superlative demo.

Foxx Strikes Back (Imageworks) is without doubt one of the funniest and most playable arcade-adventures in years. A slapstick romp which includes a gun-toting fox, a vexed vixen, beagles on bicycles, bunny bonus points, dive-bombing hens and a tongue for an energy bar! This Denton Designs classic can't be missed, after all those shoot-'em-ups a brilliant arcade adventure!

Scorpion (Rack-It) is a topical little game, concerning the latest in military hardware — the Scorpion battle tank — being put to the test in the Middle East. It must destroy bomb-laying machines and find the bombs to save an oil refinery, cheap petrol prices and the Western economies! All accompanied by a Maniacs Of Noise soundtrack.



Monster Munch (Atlantis) needs no explanation at all. It features a dot-munching yellow blob being chased around a maze by ghost-like monsters. Classic arcade action for your C64!

Creatures: The Torture Screen Demo (Thalamus) is a complete torture screen from the hottest C64 game since *Turrican*. Your friend Chaz has been captured and tied to an Acme saw mill! You're his only hope in this brilliant mini-game.

3 GREAT GAMES, 1 BRILLIANT DEMO, ZZAP! MEGATAPE TEN.

See page 34 for full game instructions.

C64GS OVERSHADOWS CDTV!

In a surprise move, Commodore has decided not to launch the CDTV at the CES Show, preferring to concentrate attention on the new C64GS console. The CDTV, which will now be unleashed on the world in October, is a machine which a lot of corporate hopes ride on with the announcement of poor financial results for last year. Worldwide profits fell from $51.3 million to $5.1 million, although the drop in sales was less dramatic — $939.7 million to $887.3 million. Moreover Commodore UK is doing well, sales here *rose* from £40 million to £74.3 million with 163,000 Amigas and almost 200,000 C64s shipped out. The marketing spend was put at almost £8 million, presumably including all those PC ads — let's hope this year the C64GS gets as much hype!

THE October CHARTS

Mr S Wells, resident of Leigh-on-Sea in Essex is the lucky one this issue, winning not £10 but £20 of software to top up his collection. Well done! To all ZZAP! readers, keep sending in those charts votes (your top three for each chart) to *Newsfield, The Charts, ZZAP!, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.*

C64 GAMES

1. Turrican ..... (Rainbow Arts)
2. The Untouchables ..... (Ocean)
3. Rainbow Islands ..... (Ocean)
4. Retrograde ..... (Thalamus)
5. MicroProse Soccer ..... (MicroProse)
6. Turbo Out Run ..... (US Gold)
7. Stunt Car Racer ..... (MicroStyle)
8. International 3D Tennis ..... (Palace)
9. Italy 1990 ..... (US Gold)
10. Klax ..... (Tengen/Domark)

AMIGA GAMES

1. Kick Off 2 ..... (Anco)
2. Xenon 2 ..... (Imageworks)
3. Turrican ..... (Rainbow Arts)
4. Rainbow Islands ..... (Ocean)
5. F-29 Retaliator ..... (Ocean)
6. Sim City ..... (Infogrames)
7. Kick Off ..... (Anco)
8. Operation Thunderbolt ..... (Ocean)
9. Klax ..... (Tengen/Domark)
10. Speedball ..... (Imageworks)

C64 MUSIC

1. Ghouls 'N' Ghosts ..... (Tim Follin)
2. Turbo Out Run ..... (Maniacs of Noise)
3. Batman: The Movie ..... (Matthew Cannon)
4. Retrograde ..... (Steve Rowlands)
5. Untouchables ..... (Matthew Cannon)

AMIGA MUSIC

1. Xenon 2 ..... (David Whittaker)
2. Batman: The Movie ..... (Jonathan Dunn)
3. Starglider 2 ..... (Dave Lowe)
4. Turrican ..... (Manfred Trenz)
5. Jumping Jackson ..... (S Picq)

COIN-OPS

1. Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles ..... (Konami)
2. Special Criminal Investigation ..... (Taito)
3. Turbo Out Run ..... (Sega)
4. Mercs ..... (Capcom)
5. Afterburner ..... (Sega)

Clive Barker's

THE NIGHTBREED

THE ACTION GAME

THE



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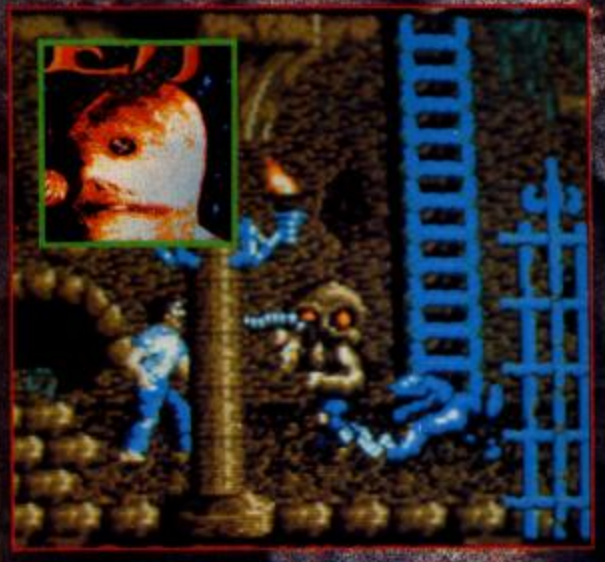


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ocean

NIGHTMARE

YOU MUST PIT YOURSELF AGAINST THE MURDEROUS REDNECK GANG FROM THE NEARBY ABOVE-GROUND CITY AND ULTIMATELY DEFEAT THE INSANE SERIAL KILLER KNOWN AS "THE MASK".



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ZZAP!TEST!

● Virgin, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99

IVAN 'IRON MAN' STEWART'S SUPER OFF-ROAD RACER



★ The water pool proves a hazard as the blue and cyan cars tangle. (Amiga)



★ Flying high, the blue car negotiates the ramps. (C64)

Across the Big Pond, Ivan 'Iron Man' Stewart is something of a celebrity in the world of off-road racing. King of the four wheel drive pick-up truck, Ivan has won more trophies and awards than you can shake a 4x4 at. His exploits saw Leland write a coin-op which proved one of the most successful of 1988 with its three-player mode the rough and tumble of pick-up truck racing/rallying and classic *Super Sprint*-style action. Now Graftgold have taken on the task of converting the *Iron Man* coin-op.



It's the start of the racing season and the four-by-four trucks are ready and raring to go, Iron Man is there and so are three other contestants revving up on the start line. Before the race each truck driver was given #100,000 to customise vital parts of their vehicle. The acceleration, top speed, shocks



★ The yellow car takes a dive into the water. (C64)

ROVING HOGG

Have all the other reviewers gone on holiday? Is Robin the only one who can drive a 4x4? Nope! What happened was Graftgold had completely finished *Iron Man* but weren't sending out review copies for a week or so. Call in roving reporter Hogg to zip across to Essex and smash up a couple of joy-sticks racing Mr Braybrook et al.



★ Hurricane Gulch: the only place with worse roads than Ludlow! (Amiga)

(for a smoother ride) and tyres (for better grip when turning) can all be upgraded to a maximum Five rating. Extra nitros (to add to the 25 initially installed in the car) can be bought for a temporary but terrific boost in acceleration around the course.

With the flag going down, the trucks nitro away from the start line, bumping and bashing their way past each other up hill and down ditch. Extra nitros can be picked up on the way round and extra cash bags are there to be collected (handy for use in the shop).

Coming first is recommended but the only requirement for staying in the championship is that you complete the fifth lap ahead of any other computer-controlled cars (and that includes Iron Man Ivan himself). Ivan may be pretty slow in the first few races but give him time and it'll be *his* rear bumper that you'll be seeing unless you upgrade wisely. Fail to beat him and you're out but using one of the three shared continue-plays gives you another chance against him (and your friends).

Get through the course and it's back to the shop to upgrade even more, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place drivers getting a reward of a kiss from Miss Iron Bikini, a trophy and quite a bit of cash. The next course out of eight beckons but to get to the eighth you have to go through the rest in order (and then the mirror image of them), making 37 levels in all. Can YOU beat Iron Man?



★ Get ready for the ride of your life... (C64)



Although it didn't push the *Super Sprint* idea too much, *Iron Man* has always been great fun in the arcade because of its rough and tumble, chaotic fun element, making for a surprisingly successful coin-op and unsurprisingly playable computer game conversion. It wouldn't have pushed Graftgold's abilities too much to convert but they've worked wonders squeezing it all into one load on the C64 and providing bags of colour and detail in the cars.

The Amiga benefits with samples and a total of 18 tunes for tracks, countries and the trophy presentation (dig that banjo and honk that horn!). The 16-bit graphic quality is really taken advantage of with some excellent attention to detail in the cars. The screen is packed and what you have is a slick looking game (right down the to the start-up where you input your date of birth and select your country).

The C64 version is spot-on with no multiload to hinder the pace and the full set of effects straight from the arcade machine like the clouds of dust when you nitro off a bump, the handy short cuts, and three-player mode. Even the country selection is in there and amazingly everything's crammed into one load. Fun and playability together — all the ingredients to make *Iron Man* one very tasty cake indeed.

You really get into the swing of things seeing the trucks rough riding it all over the place, it's a great feeling to nitro past the opposition to take the winning flag and bumping other vehicles around is a game in itself. Through the simplicity of the control method — rotate left/right and accelerate — *Iron Man* is instantly addictive and proves one great rough ride all the way!

C64

PRESENTATION 88%
Three-player mode. Great loading screen, three continue-plays. Demo mode. Different countries to select from. No multiload at all!

GRAPHICS 84%
Very good animation on the vehicles and good use of colour but tracks are a little lacking in graphic variety (the layout changes and that's all but it still looks good).

SOUND 82%
Three fast paced tunes for the races together with trophy tunes and a title tune. Not outstanding but fun nonetheless.

HOOKABILITY 87%
As addictive as *Super Sprint* games come, one to three players can get instantly hooked...

LASTABILITY 79%
...and stay hooked with a major challenge to get through all eight courses in both directions. Could get somewhat repetitive in one-player mode with limited graphic variety and no-one else to play against.

OVERALL 85%

A highly playable *Super Sprint* variant proving as much fun as the coin-op.

amiga

PRESENTATION 90%
Three-player mode. Attractive start-up screens, demo, three continue-plays, upgrade shop and trophy screens. Select your date-of-birth before the start (!) and select a country option (complete with anthems). Multiload for each track but it's not excessive.

GRAPHICS 88%
Great attention to detail in the relatively small trucks and their movement with plenty of frames of animation, great dirt shading and excellent detail in the extra effects (clouds of smoke, leaping the hills etc.)

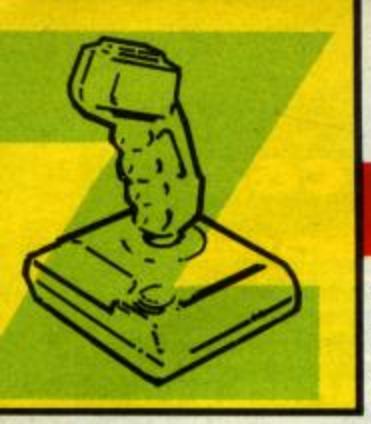
SOUND 89%
A jolly variety of suitably fast paced tunes (different one for each course) together with good samples. Separate country anthems, title and trophy screen tunes.

HOOKABILITY 86%
Infectious gameplay proving even more addictive with more players. Trying to beat your friends becomes even more fun than trying to beat computer-controlled Iron Man.

LASTABILITY 80%
The order of playing through each course in turn both in one direction and then the other makes it a strong if somewhat repetitive challenge. Repetition avoided by more players to give it the fun element.

OVERALL 87%

A highly playable *Super Sprint* variant, proving great fun with the multi-players option, high quality graphics and excellent attention to detail.



ZZAP!TEST!

● System 3, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99

FLIMBO'S QUEST



Dandruff's never been such a serious problem. But it'll take more than a bottle of Head & Shoulders to defeat the fiendish Dr Franz Dandruff. He's gone and kidnapped a young girl called Pearly. Why? Because he needs her 'bodily sustaining juices' to reverse the effects of a failed immortality experiment: the mad doctor is ageing ten times as fast as normal.

Luckily Pearly's boyfriend, Flimbo, is a brave fellow and sets out to rescue his beloved. Unfortunately, the rapidly ageing Dandruff has a clever head on his shoulders and quickly creates a horde of mutants to stop Flimbo. These little monsters run and jump around the horizontally scrolling, platform-packed levels trying to bite and sting the cute hero to remove one of three lives. Thankfully Flimbo is armed with a little gun to shoot the nasties, though most of them require several shots.

The only way to get through a level is to collect parchments. On each of these is one letter of a computer code word — complete the word and you finish the level. All seven words need to be completed and entered into Dandruff's computer to paralyse the potty professor.

Each level also has a shop where Flimbo can buy special items with collected cash or activate items collected. These include a potion which automatically completes the current word, an hour glass for temporary immunity, and balls and arrows which double the reach and strength of Flimbo's shots. There's also an hour-glass to extend the game's strict overall time limit.

Cash is obtained from dying nasties or from treasure rooms accessed through secret entrances. Inside these, bonus money can be made by collecting the moneybags in the correct order.



Despite the ads this isn't a Sizzler, but it is fun. The graphics are nice on both machines with some good parallax scrolling (even the level behind is superbly detailed) and some very cute characters. Sound is equally impressive with an appropriately jolly in-game tune (different ones for each level on Amiga). Gameplay is admittedly simplistic — similar to *Hawkeye* but, just like that game, very playable. Okay, *Flimbo's Quest* isn't exactly the most innovative game around but it's excellently presented with cute action which holds a strange fascination. Even the C64 multiload is thoughtfully done — speedy and with your score totting up as it happens.



Despite not being written by the same team as *Hawkeye*, *Flimbo* shares the same style albeit with better graphics. The backgrounds are superbly detailed — it's easy to become distracted just admiring their excellence, especially on the C64. Gameplay is fun, with the time limit and wimpy gun forcing you to dodge aliens as much, or more, than you blast them. As you'd expect of System 3 there's plenty of nice touches, like the *Bombjack* bit in the treasure rooms. Unfortunately the basic gameplay is overly familiar and lacks variety — especially for a £25 Amiga game. Still it's a quiet time of year and I'm sure this fun game will do well.



64

PRESENTATION 85%
Very quick multiload, Good intro sequence.

GRAPHICS 82%
Plenty of variety with some excellent large nasties and superb parallax with detailed backgrounds.

SOUND 80%
Jolly Maniacs of Noise in-game tune plus good FX.

HOOKABILITY 84%
Very addictive and fun to play.

LASTABILITY 79%
Seven graphically varied levels of increasing toughness.

OVERALL 80%

A fun and demanding game albeit rather repetitive.

amiga

PRESENTATION 79%
Unobtrusive multiload, good intro.

GRAPHICS 80%
Good parallax effect, detailed backdrops.

SOUND 78%
Appropriately jolly tunes.

HOOKABILITY 76%
Slightly disappointing but addictive 8-bit gameplay.

LASTABILITY 73%
Very challenging but ultimately repetitive.

OVERALL 77%

Good fun if a bit simplistic.

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ZZAP!TEST!

● Dinamic, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk; Amiga £19.95

SATAN

Your worst nightmare has come true. Yes, those satanic film planners have taken over the world, torturing everyone with their psychedelic colours. Until now no-one has been brave enough to tell them that grass really isn't pink, but at last a brave warrior steps forward.

Before he can take on the evil planners he must learn the secrets of magic and become a wizard. This is achieved in the first of two independent game sections (as usual with Dinamic games, completing the first gives an access code for the second). The long-haired barbarian hero ventures through multi-directionally scrolling levels filled with platforms to jump on and pillars to climb. As well as a time limit to battle against, there are plenty of film planning minions on hand to reduce his energy, including axe-wielding lumberjacks, flying gargoyles and reproducing dwarfs. When shot, some of these leave behind an object — these include coins and gems for points, elixirs for extra energy, and more powerful weapons such as the *R-Type*-style beam.

At the end of each level, there is a large super-baddie which, when defeated, drops a scroll of magic. Collect all these and the warrior becomes a wizard, prepared to enter the Palace Of The Clouds where several other wizards have been imprisoned. At last, Satan (also known as Beezlebub or Uffindell) makes a personal appearance. Even when 'destroyed' he turns into two Cyphers — deadly flying demons. When shot, each of these mutates into two Damiens — rapid-firing, flying demons.

Every time a creature is destroyed it drops a coin which can be spent at Brownie the Wizard's (very handily located) shop to buy weapons, shields, two types of map, and a teleport pad which can be dropped at a useful place. To rescue a wizard the creature escorting him to his execution must be killed. At least one wizard has to be rescued (and all the evil forces destroyed) to complete the game.



The C64 version looked very nice indeed on the screenshots, so it's a surprise that the game itself looks so dull. As for gameplay it's very like *Black Tiger* — surely Dinamic could've been 'inspired' by a better coin-op. The prospect of making lots of pixel-perfect jumps from pillar to post is not a happy one, and the baddies are even more vicious — this really is the Film Planners' Revenge. As for the Amiga game, it looks a lot better (although scrolling is a bit jerky) and plays somewhat more enjoyably. The ability to play either of the two games is welcome, but Dinamic still seem in desperate need of original ideas and demanding gametesters.

★ The magic game can be played when you want on the Amiga.



★ A flying demon swoops in on the unnamed barbarian-like hero. (C64)





Despite the title this isn't 'reet hellish'. In reality it's a weak *Black Tiger* variant. On the C64 it suffers from a general lack of colour and some chunky, undetailed sprites. The Amiga game looks totally different but is still unimpressive with jerky scrolling and again a rather limited colour scheme.

Basically all there is to do is jump and climb the platforms, shooting everything that moves. It sounds hectic but it isn't; the game bumbles along at a leisurely pace, especially with the hero's initially slow rate of fire. The collision detection is also unnecessarily fussy when it comes to the pillars — if you're not pixel-perfect you miss them completely and inevitably fall a frustratingly long way down. I was also extremely annoyed by a quirk on the C64 whereby the hero alternately shoots/throws a bomb. If you play this game you'll certainly know what hell is!

64

PRESENTATION 62%
Standard Dinamic multiload system: completing the first game gives the code for the second. Very nice instructions.

GRAPHICS 51%
Fast multi-directional scrolling and nice backgrounds, but the sprites are disappointing — especially the main character.

SOUND 42%
Disappointing spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 39%
Difficult and frustrating to begin with due to pixel-perfect jumping.

LASTABILITY 45%
A tough challenge with two complete games for the price of one.

OVERALL 43%

Hell on earth.

amiga

PRESENTATION 54%
You can choose game to play without needing a codeword, again nice instructions.

GRAPHICS 72%
The graphics are imaginative and highly detailed, but the scrolling is a bit jerky.

SOUND 45%
Okay intro tune and in-game FX.

HOOKABILITY 44%
Slow paced and repetitive, although the option to play the second game helps.

LASTABILITY 49%
Two large games means there's plenty to do, but it's all rather dull.

OVERALL 47%

Another nice-looking Dinamic game which sadly lacks gameplay.

IT'S MIND BLOWING ...IT'S TNT

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ZZAP!TEST!

DELIVERANCE
Stormlord 2

● **Hewson, C64**
£10.99 cassette,
£14.99 disk

Stormlord's dreams have been answered: the busty young fairies in his original adventure have changed to full human-size (and still don't like wearing clothes!). But rather than trying to get them banned, the evil black Queen has had them imprisoned in Hell. Only Stormlord can save the fairies, and the fact that Hell is a fairly dangerous place isn't going to discourage him...

Stormlord's original quest was an arcade adventure with numerous puzzles to solve. The sequel is much more of a horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up. The basic objective is to fight your way through to the end of the level with as many fairies as you can rescue. These life-size beauties float across the screen and are collected by jumping at them. On later levels demons will try and grab them off you. The demons come in plenty of different shapes, including persistently swooping bats, fireball-throwing trolls, zombies which rise out of the ground and fast-moving dragons. There's also acid droplets, rivers of fire, acid bubbles and avalanches of falling rock.

Initially Stormlord is armed merely with a fast-firing fireball, but previous adventurers have left plenty of other weapons to collect such as a crossbow, bouncing bombs and grenades. These all have limited ammo and are activated by holding down fire. Stormlord can also do special mid-air leaps, pressing up three times provides a mega-leap! Even better, Stormlord can ride on a small dragon, if he prevents her eggs falling.

The game has six levels in

★ A demon flies off with one of your fairies: shoot him to win her back!



★ Periodically you get a chance to ride on a dragon!





★ Things are getting hotter: rescue the fairy before she falls into the fire pit.



After getting away with the slightly risqué graphics of the original, game designer Raff Cecco has made the naked fairies even bigger as well as keeping plenty of nude female statues to enliven the scenery. It's all good clean fun, and it can't harm sales, but it's gameplay that matters. The original was an above average arcade adventure with some maddeningly difficult arcade bits, and it's the latter which form the basis of the sequel. This means it's very frustrating to begin with, and nine lives go very quickly indeed. Patience is required, which can detract from the blasting action. On the positive side the levels are all very different and packed with variety, one level even having an *Asteroids* influence! The game *is* very tough, but the scorecode system means you only have to beat two levels to get onto the next load and continue from there. Recommended for all those people who completed *Turrican* on their first go!

all, in three loads. At the end of each load a special code is provided which allows you to continue on the next load with the same amount of fairies and score. There's also a bonus level where the fairies Stormlord has saved float above his head. They're grateful to Stormlord but shy, so he must leap up — on the hearts which he drops — to capture them before they will give him a coin, two of which buy an extra life.



Any game containing nude women gets my vote! Whoops, where have I heard that before? Anyway, the sprites are generally top-notch, though their size means the game is a little slow — rushing about and blasting gets you nowhere. Although very playable, the game can be frustratingly tough at times, until you learn tactics to cope with each of the varied enemies, but you do get nine lives and plenty of extra ones can be obtained in the delightful bonus section. The innovative scorecode system is also an advance over the original, avoiding annoying level repetition. Overall *Deliverance* delivers the goods with a good dollop of sauce. Yum yum, I like it!

PRESENTATION 80%
Very useful scorecode to access loads two and three, sensible keys option and a free sticker!

GRAPHICS 81%
Large, impressive sprites move well across a nicely detailed and smoothly scrolling landscape.

SOUND 84%
Choice of good FX or excellent Maniacs Of Noise soundtracks.

HOOKABILITY 76%
High difficulty level makes it initially very frustrating...

LASTABILITY 82%
...but six extremely varied levels provide a very tough but rewarding challenge.

OVERALL 79%

A variety-packed blast-'em-up.

● Ubi Soft, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

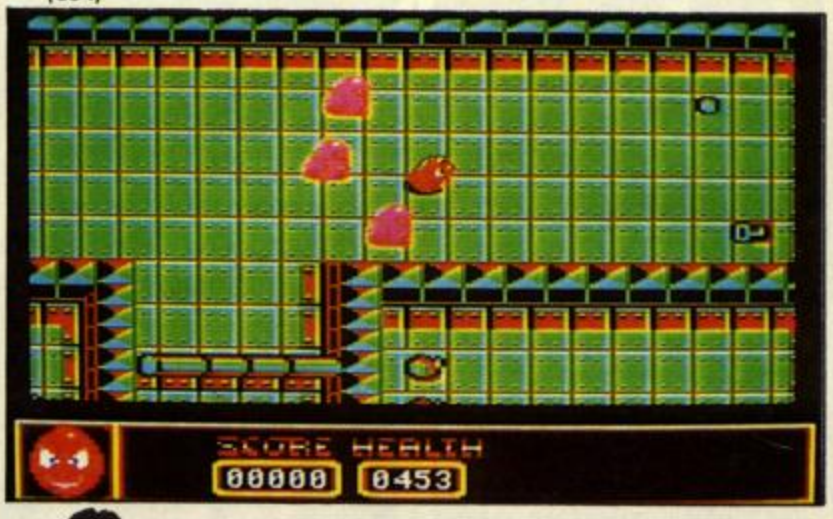
PUFFY'S SAGA

Take a rotund, yellow chap with no arms or legs and put him in a maze full of power dots and monsters. What have you got? Well, actually it's *Puffy's Saga*.

You get to help Puffy (or his female equivalent Puffyn — distinguished by a bow on her head!) escape from his dungeon prison. On each of 20 scrolling, multiloaded levels all the 'pad goms' (power dots) must be collected to advance to the next.

The monsters which patrol the mazes — including ghosts, acid puddles, flying dragons and dangerous eyes — reduce Puffy's energy on contact. However, although armless, Puffy isn't totally harmless: he can shoot at the nasties. Bonus items can also be collected to give extra speed and firepower, monster repellency and invisibility. Food replenishes energy while keys open locked wall sections. Blue 'magic goms' can be activated in several ways — to provide a level map, slow monsters, or even equip Puffy with a flamethrower!

★ Puffy is chased by pink ghosts as he races towards a key and power dot. (C64)





Saga is definitely the right word for this: it takes an age to load each (not particularly big) level — it even stupidly reloads the first when you die on it. Unfortunately the game is only marginally more enjoyable than the waiting. Graphics are dull with the levels looking much the same apart from a change in sickening colour. As for the action it's mind-numbingly boring maze fodder without a hint of originality. Save your money and buy *Gauntlet* on budget.



Well, what can I say about a game where you're Puffy? 'Cheap *Gauntlet* variant with cutesy, *Pac Man*-inspired graphics' sounds about right. The title music's nice and funky and the high score screen (called *Hall of Puffy Men* — ahem!) is quite impressive, with bi-directional colour flow on the swinging table. The small Puffy sprite is remarkably detailed but otherwise graphics are crude, as is the infuriating, incomprehensibly multiloaded game as a whole. I sincerely hope the *Saga* of the title isn't meant to imply a series of sequels.

PRESENTATION 45%
Good title screen, invaluable save game position, choice between Puffy and Puffyn. Appalling multiload.

GRAPHICS 35%
Mediocre with not much variety.

SOUND 66%
Jaunty title tune, okay in-game FX.

HOOKABILITY 34%
Frustratingly tough at first.

LASTABILITY 38%
20 challenging but unentertaining levels.

OVERALL 37%

Unoriginal and putdated, hardly a-maze-ing.



ZZAP!TEST!

● **Virgin Mastertronic,**
C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS

Ah yes, the Silly Six from the classic BBC comedy series, John Cleese, Michael Palin, Eric Idle, Terry Gilliam, Terry Jones and the other one (that's Graham Chapman — Ed). The *Python* game concentrates on Palin's leading character, the loud, dim-witted Gumby. During routine surgery, our hanky-wearing hero's brain made a break for it, splitting into four pieces and escaping into the surreal Monty Python cartoon world. Unless he can retrieve all parts of his brain, Gumby's dreams of becoming a chartered accountant are dashed.

There are four levels, one for each brain segment, and during them Gumby takes four different forms. As himself, he hops around platforms, but he also floats around mazes of pipes as Gumbyfish, through the skies as Gumbybird and, in bonus rooms, is just a head on springy foot. Wherever and whatever he is, he has a limitless supply of fish to throw/fire at his adversaries, which include dead parrots, vikings on wheels, Silly Walk ministers and flying feet. Fired fish can also activate switches and destroy cheese blocks, often revealing energy-giving food or tins of Spam. If Gumby reaches the end of the level with sixteen tins, he's rewarded with a piece of brain.

In the Amiga version, there's a simple interpretation of the Argument Sketch between levels. Gumby fights John Cleese who says 'No it isn't!' and 'Yes it is!' at random, the words appearing in speech bubbles to his left or right. Gumby must disagree with him using his own no/yes bubbles, each disagreement earning bonus points.



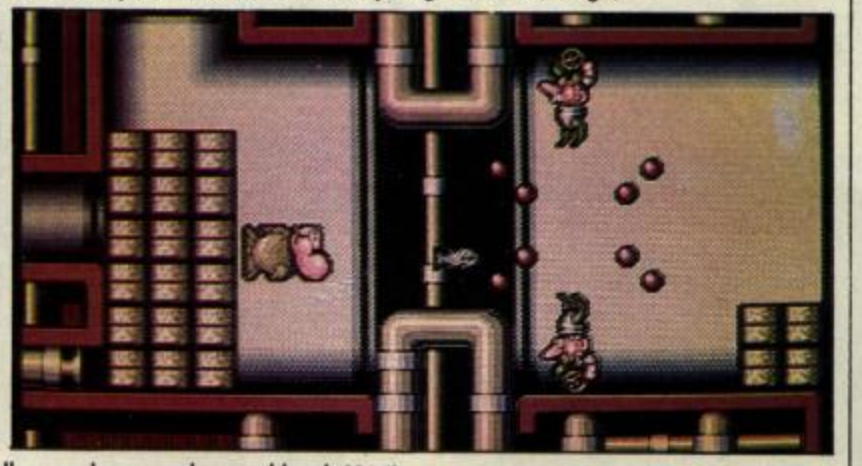
Monty Python is pretty disappointing (yes, Warren, but why? — Ed). Blimey, I knew I had to give my opinion but I didn't expect the Spanish Inquisi— *NOBODY expects the Spanish Inquisition! Our key weapon is fear — fear and surprise! Ah — our TWO key weapons are fear, surprise and ruthlessness! Er, our THREE...* Ahem. Sprites represent characters from the series in a pleasing if blocky manner, Gumby himself particularly well designed. And although short on detail, backgrounds are authentic too. Sound's duff on the 64 but the Amiga's TV samples are amusing. Gameplay's the problem, though: *Monty Python*'s just a very ordinary, simplistic shoot-'em-up. Attack waves are dull, hopelessly predictable, and lining up cheeseblock after cheeseblock is pretty mind-numbing; *Monty Python* is pining for some playability.



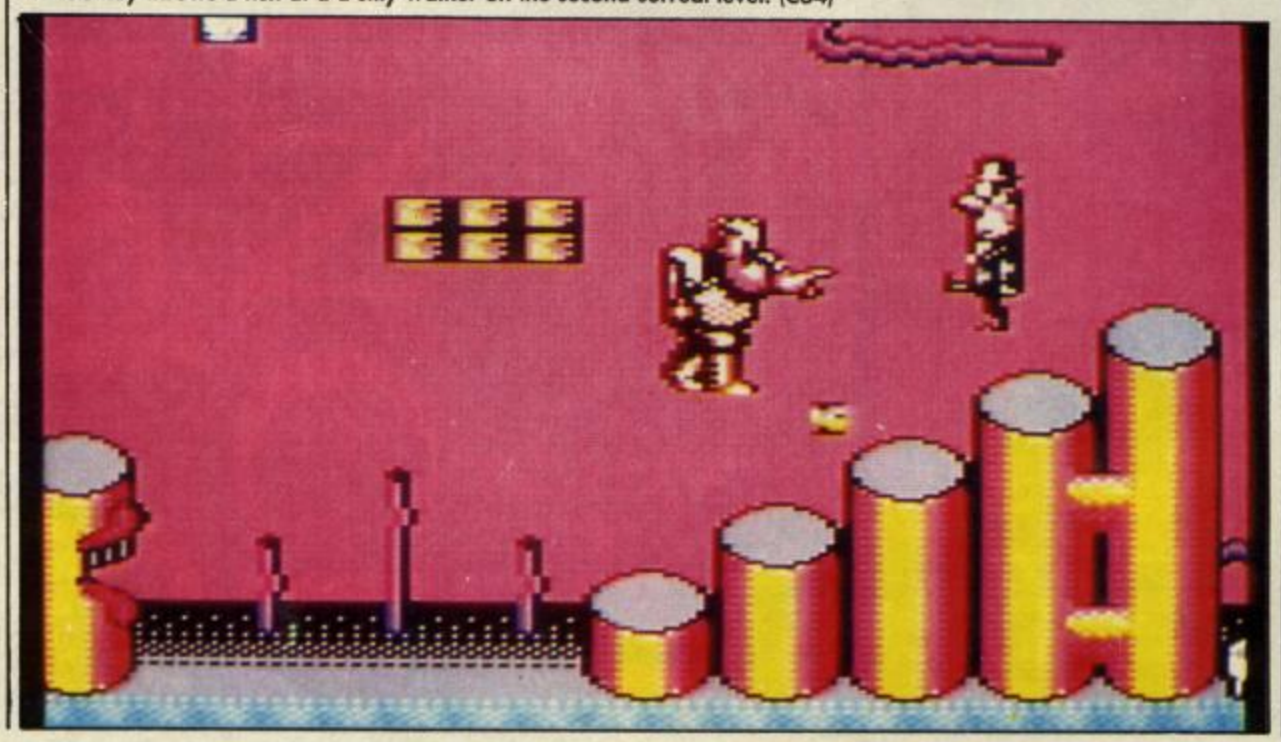
And now for something not particularly different. As a Monty Python fan I'm disappointed with the game. Sure it's got a lot of zany humour and the graphics are a fair imitation of Terry Gilliam's surreal animations, if a bit blocky on the C64. But let's face it, the game plays like a dead parrot — either that or it's pining for the fjords. Shooting a stream of nasties one by one is even more repetitive than the spam song. This, with the lack of a time limit, reduces the pace of the game to a very silly walk indeed.

The Amiga's cartoon interludes and hilarious argument and regurgitation scenes go some way to make up for the lack of gameplay variety. But at its best the game is only mildly amusing; at worst just plain silly.

★ Gumbyfish takes on some unicycling bunnies. (Amiga)



★ Gumby throws a fish at a a silly walker on the second surreal level. (C64)



64

PRESENTATION 56%
Bland title and high score screens, 'silly' low score gimmick and multi-looded levels, but mildly amusing instructions and Cheeselock protection system.

GRAPHICS 65%
Jerky push-scroll, flat backdrops but good, Pythonesque sprites.

SOUND 37%
Choose between a repetitive, irritating rendition of the TV theme tune or some old-fashioned effects.

HOOKABILITY 60%
Initial interest due to the TV series immediately dampened by the game's simplistic nature.

LASTABILITY 41%
Only four levels and with the first so easy to complete, it won't last long. But then, with play this drab neither will you.

OVERALL 47%

Another TV licence falls on its face.

amiga

PRESENTATION 82%
C64 features plus 'cartoon' intermission screens, brief sketches and interlevel Argument game.

GRAPHICS 74%
Both sprites and backgrounds are authentic Python but this means the latter are dully coloured. Scrolling's a touch jerky.

SOUND 60%
Passable rendition of TV title music, a few silly sound effects and some amusing if unclear vocal samples.

HOOKABILITY 67%
Sketches and cartoons add interest to the basic shoot-'em-up gameplay.

LASTABILITY 50%
More challenging than the 64 version and the Argument Sketch adds a little variety. Ultimately a small, repetitive game.

OVERALL 57%

Graphics and sound capture the spirit of the TV series but gameplay doesn't match up.



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ZZAP!TEST!

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ATOMIX

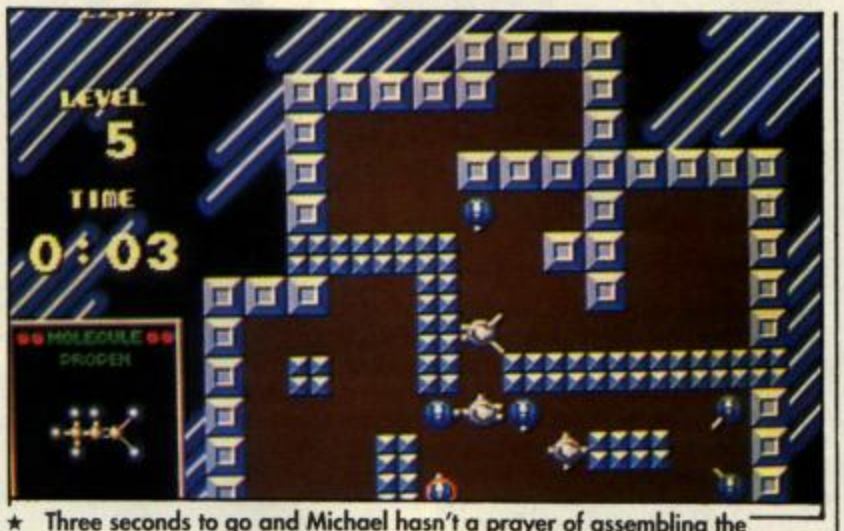
Atomix isn't only a puzzle game, it's an *educational* puzzle game with the aim of the game being to arrange scattered atoms so they form a molecule. The game has thirty levels, each consisting of a static playfield, the walls of which can both hinder and help you in your task. The shape of the molecule you must replicate is shown on the left of the screen, together with time remaining level and points scored. By using mouse or joystick you must move the scattered atoms so they form the molecule. Sounds simple, huh?

Unfortunately, once you start to move an atom — either horizontally or vertically — it won't stop until it hits a wall or another atom. The trick is find a place in the playfield where there's room to fit the whole molecule, and the walls are there to support it. You can also use other atoms to get the right shape. Once you complete the molecule the time limit is multiplied to provide bonus points. As you progress through the game the molecules get more and more complex.

If you fail to complete a molecule in time you get an opportunity to continue-play at the cost of a certain amount of points deducted from your score. If your score isn't high enough then it's back to the beginning.

After every five levels there's a bonus round where flasks must be arranged in order, running from an empty flask to a full one.

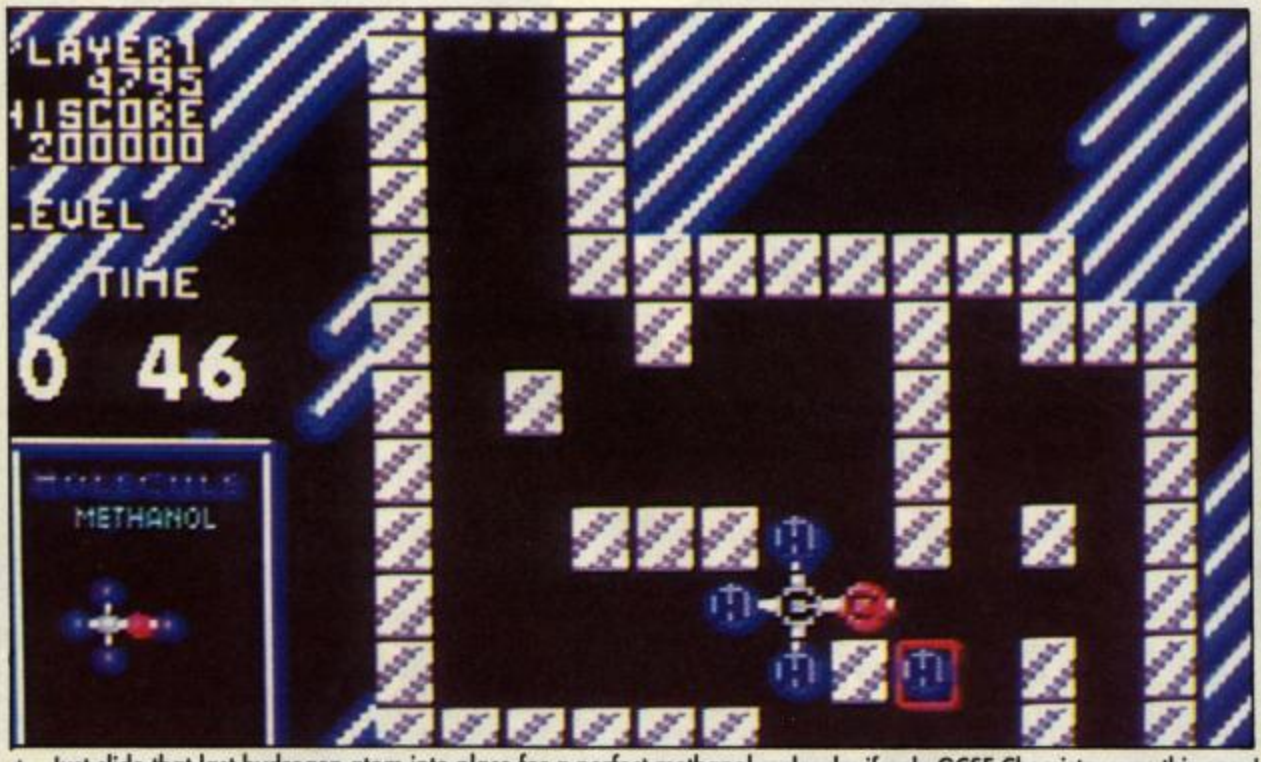
There are also three skill levels, which simply reduce the number of time you're given per level, and a cooperative two-player mode. In this mode players take turns, each having up to thirty seconds to make their move.



★ Three seconds to go and Michael hasn't a prayer of assembling the propen molecule in time. (Amiga)



I saw an early version of this and thought it looked incredibly boring. Okay there's some good puzzle action but it looks very dull. Unfortunately, once you actually play the game it turns out to be completely addictive. The night after a hard day's play I was dreaming about how to move the atoms around! As with *Welltris* and *Klax*, thinking about things helps, but most of the time you're acting on instinct just as much as in a normal arcade game. It's incredibly satisfying completing a molecule and impossible to leave the game until you've finished it. In fact it isn't that difficult to complete, Robin's done it already on 'easy' difficulty, but going for a high score provides some lasting challenge — and it really is great fun to play. If it were cheaper, or had sixty levels and more bonus levels this would be an essential buy. The C64 graphics could also be a bit better, but it's still great fun to play. Superb fun and well worth a look.



★ Just slide that last hydrogen atom into place for a perfect methanol molecule: if only GCSE Chemistry was this easy!



Zero marks to Thalion for originality: *Atomix*'s roots begin in those sliding tile games (invented Lord knows how many decades ago) and were tweaked for Logotron's two *Xor* games and Entertainment International's *Leonardo*, which gave space to manoeuvre and perpetual motion to the concept. Thalion have tried to be scientific and indeed, although backgrounds are simple, formula components are neat and work well, and the buzzing noise they make as they're shifted is great. Personally, however, this type of game leaves me cold; I'd much rather blast a few ships or slay a few monsters than fiddle around with some silly old formulae. It's fine to while away an hour or so but I wouldn't pay good money for it.

64

PRESENTATION 62%
Three skill levels, attractive loading screen and an okay two-player mode. So far levels are just one load, but restart requires reloading of intro screen on disk.

GRAPHICS 40%
A bit dull and repetitive, but fast and effective.

SOUND 74%
Vaguely familiar but very nice soundtrack.

HOOKABILITY 76%
Takes a few goes to get hooked, but thereafter impossible to leave alone...

LASTABILITY 79%
... and thirty levels provide quite a bit of challenge.

OVERALL 76%

An extremely playable puzzle game.

amiga

PRESENTATION 60%
Three skill levels, but two-player mode isn't that useful.

GRAPHICS 45%
Simplistic, but slick and effective.

SOUND 52%
Minimalistic but attractive sound FX.

HOOKABILITY 77%
As with the C64, soon becomes utterly compulsive.

LASTABILITY 74%
A bit easier, with slightly clearer graphics and time limits seem more generous.

OVERALL 76%

A brilliantly playable little puzzle game.

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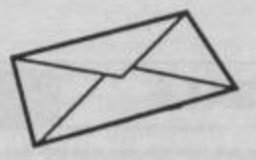
RRAP...

I never realised ZZAP! had so many famous readers. Either that or all that scorching summer heat has sent a few letter writers barmy. I wonder which celebrities will write in next month? — Elvis Presley or maybe even Stuart 'Elvis Lookalike' Wynne! I really don't think it could just be sunstroke, though. I mean I was sat in the Stalag exercise yard for many an hour and it hasn't affected me. And now I'd like to sing you one of my old hits... 'Well itsa one for the money, two for the show, three...'

KYLIE UNLIKELY

Dear Lloyd
I feel that I must complain about the disgusting, despicable and disgraceful sexist attitude shown in Issue 61 (Rrap p36). Showing a half naked, no in fact more than half naked women with the caption 'Saucy Software' is total degrading the opposite sex. And furthermore I would like to add that, hold on, there is something playing on my computer. The computer's typing all on it's own. It's some invisible spirit.
POLTERGEIST!
Aaaaaahhhhhhh! calm yourself. What's it typing? It's going to fast to read. I can see the outline of the ghost. It's about 5ft and it's skinny (must of died of anorexia nervosa).
Hold on it's stopped. The program's running. It's got a hypnotic drumbeat and tune. The ghost is singing. The words are coming out faintly.
NO, IT CAN'T BE. IT IS!!!!!
Aaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhh!
'I should be so lucky, lucky, lucky, lucky
I should be so lucky lucky
I should be so lucky.....'
It's Kylie Minogue!! Somebody help me. Oh my God, its coming to me it's trying to hold me.
I must sing, sing, I should be so. No what's happening I'm turning into Kylie Minogue!!!!!
Aaaahhhh!!!!
My face, my hair, my body, It's melting I am melting. My skin's peeling off, my hair's turning blonde.
Somebody help me, help me!!!!!
Aaaaaaahhhhhhhhhh!!!! help me... Argh...
Hi, I'm Kylie Minogue and do you want to hear me sing? Yes, but first I would like to encourage some comp, comp, comp sorry I can't say that word but the people who make games to make a game about me.
And now for my song.
I should be so lucky.....
Luv
Kylie, Australia.

● ***Er, thanks Kylie. I wonder if any readers have got any ideas for a game about Kylie or any other pop stars. If so, send them in (the more gruesome, the better! — Ed).***
LM



ENNIMORE LIKE HIM?

Dear Lloyd
It seems to be very en vogue (there, that was a nice posh phrase, wasn't it? It's French and it means trendy! You could do with some more posh phrases in the mag, because it definitely raises the tone. See, my letter's already had its tone raised several notches and I've only written 71 words!) Now, where was I.... Oh yes, it seems to be trendy at the moment to write letters to ZZAP! in the form of lists. Well, I'm going to do exactly the same, just to annoy everyone. You know it makes sense.
1. Classifieds (RIP). It's a shame that you've had to get rid of them. I mean, nobody reads them properly but I like to scan through them to see if anyone's willing to swap an Amiga with £5000 of games and equipment for two boxes of Technical Lego (any offers? It's the big car and the hydraulic JCB), and it brought a lump to my throat when I read the little 'obituary' this month. Boo hoo.
2. The Price of Games. It's £9.95 for the 64 and between £20-25 for the Amiga (© Arthur Ennimore's Book Of Extremely Interesting Information). Of course, it's all the fault of pirates and so on, I mean the fact that we are still willing to buy games even though they have obscene prices has nothing to do with it. Surely if we stopped buying games with such high prices (especially Amiga owners. £25 for a game? That's 6 months' pocket money for me!) then the software people would bring the prices down. I normally use the Zzuperstore and Mail Order firms. I think the last game I bought for £9.99 was **Hawkeye!** So I've done my bit to help combat those horrid nasty pirates. And another thing, if consoles (Sega, Nintendo, and Commodore's rumoured 64 console) mean zero piracy and piracy increases the prices of games, why are games for consoles so expensive?
3. Bleach. I know the Scorelord likes it, but then a one-legged man has many troubles in the land of the spineless goat.
4. Escape (oops, that might be censored). You know what I think you should do, Lloyd? Remember, there's always people worse off than yourselves. For example, ST owners (cliché, cliché). I'm sure Stalag ZZAP! is a very nice place. There you go, Mr Scorelord, I've written it, can you remove your Semi-ionising Photrazon Cannon from my left ear now? Thank you.
5. Lack of Inspiration. I'm suffering from a very nasty attack of that right now, because I can't think of anything to write.
6. The Sentinel. Why wasn't this game, surely one of the best games ever to grace any computer anywhere in the known universe given a rating when it was reviewed? Pr'ythee, my liege, tell, for thou hast but few more lines to read.
7. Requests. Can I just say hello to my brothers Duwant and Thersnot, and my sister Isther? No, I didn't think so.
8. Men in White Coats. Well, I'm afraid I really must go now, because they've come to take me back to my padded box, wibble. Bye!
This has been an Arthur Ennimore production. Thank you.
Arthur Ennimore, Worcester WR2 4TL.

● ***Thanks for your observations Arthur, I'm totally* en rapport.** ***Your point about console games is a particularly interesting***

MUM'S THE WORD

Dear Lloyd
I got in touch with the Scorelord's mother the other day and told her what he is up to, capturing Phil King and the other members of the ZZAP! team and not to mention (which I did) dissecting poor old Stuart and she says, 'I knew that boy was trouble as soon as he electrocuted the cat. If he makes any more trouble I'll stop his allowance for ten zeaons and see how he likes that.'
Matt Evans, Swansea SA6 5PF.
PS. Tell the Scorelord he owes me 1000000000000000 zzean coins for the phone bill.
PPS. Ask him what that is in pounds and pence.

● ***He says it's just one pound... of your flesh!***
LM

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ZZAP!RRAP!



one: the reason for their high price is unclear, though it might have something to do with the way the cartridges are usually manufactured only by the console maker. Who said anything about restrictive practices? Not me.
LM



THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Dear ZZAP!
After reading Issue 62 I thought it was finally time I put word processor to printer to write to yourselves at ZZAP! Towers. I suppose I must be one of your 'old' readers being the grand old age of twenty-one, although I was just sixteen when I first picked up ZZAP! Issue 1, and after reading all 62 issues I am still here. Anyway, the main reason for this letter is my response to Mark Neesan's letter in Issue 62 titled 'Software Not Looking Good', for I feel that Mark has successfully summed up the state of the games software today.

Games seem to be turning out like most other commercialised industry products, running parallel with cars for instance, ie lots of products all looking and performing to the same specifications and rules. Look at most modern cars and see how similar they are compared to cars of a few years back. Perhaps games could also be compared to the pop music industry in the same way as cars. Why do all bands wear the same clothes and write (have written for them?) the same type of songs using the same rhythms and even the same sounds? Where is the innovation? Where is the originality? Of course there are many exceptions but I am mainly talking about the average product.

Look at most of the highly rated games in the most magazines and they all seem to have a very indistinctive graphic style that you could have seen before in many other games. Yet Picasso's work didn't look like Michelangelo's, and neither style looked anything like work produced by Andy Warhol or Francis Bacon. Why aren't there computer artists as distinctive as artists in the canvas art world? In fact on the subject of art, computer music doesn't fare any better. Most computer musicians seem to be copying current music styles rather than creating their own. Take **Blood Money** for instance, the music quality was superb yet when a friend of mine heard it he commented, 'I didn't know there was an Erasure game on your computer...' I don't think Vince Clark and Andy Bell wrote that tune, but it sure sounds like them. **Blood Money** also had superb graphics, yet underneath all the gloss was a fairly mediocre game. In fact the very basic gameplay is quite similar to that of an old arcade game called **Vanguard,** or even **Scramble.** Again, I know there are exceptions in graphics and music, but the point I am making is that they seem so far and few between.

Very few games designers seem to be willing to take a chance, to try something new, break new ground, push the barriers forward. Maybe part of this is because of the high amount of commercialism in current software, in fact the huge majority of software is coin-op conversions or licence tie-ins. The games that stand up on their own seem almost non-existent. I remember when a coin-op conversion was a rarity, when ZZAP! was 95p and had Gary Penn, Julian Rignall and Bob Wade as staff writers, when Stock, Aitken and Waterman were struggling for recognition, when people actually liked the Tory party.....

What about that dreaded word 'Hype', unfortunately just as common in the software world as anywhere else. Take **Xenon II** for instance. Everyone rated it highly, yet after I played it intensely, I felt that the graphics were average, the sound wasn't particularly inspiring, and the gameplay was sluggish and certainly not original. Yet some magazines were hailing it as the game of the year. Why? Was it because of the pre-release hype? Was it because of the buzz it generated from all those preview shots and slogans telling us how good the game was? All it was was just another shoot-'em-up with lots of 'wave patterns' and 'end-of-level baddies'. There seemed to be a bit of the 'King's new clothes' syndrome about **Xenon II.** Game of the year? No way.

Often I look back at some of the old games I used to play like crazy, yet I can't find many recent games that have had the same effect. Come to think of it most new arcade games don't fare much better, suffering from the gloss/hydraulics/super sounds but poor gameplay syndrome as well. I was thinking that perhaps I had grown out of playing games until I did what Mark Neesan did and tried to analyse what made those classic games so good to play. Mark is certainly right when he suggests that most modern games are geared towards graphics, sound and presentation while underneath is a mediocre game. What is it that made a classic game, say **Paradroid** so brilliant? Take a look at the game structure and it starts to become clear. Graphics, not particularly amazing, but functional and perfectly portraying the setting of the game. Sound, again far from amazing, but coupled with the graphics help to create an intense atmosphere. Then alongside this we get the gameplay, not an afterthought out to complement all the graphics and sound but meticulously thought out to complement all aspects of the game. Also the gameplay featured a random element, unlike **Blood Money/ Xenon II** where you always get the same alien formations at the same points in the game. No two games in **Paradroid** could ever be the same, you never got the same robots in the same places on the same levels. I think it was this element that made **Paradroid** so compelling, not knowing what lay ahead, or round the next corner. **Paradroid** was, and still is a masterpiece. Another game that used the random element in a similar sort of way was **Impossible Mission,** which randomly selected the rooms for each game. You had no idea where the rooms were let alone what was in them until you went in head first. Both these games also had huge amounts of playability, something that is shared by programmers like Jeff Minter **— Iridis Alpha** (Come back Jeff, please write some more games), and Sensible Software — **Wizball,** who put gameplay first and foremost. These guys didn't get their reputation for nothing.

Moving on to game scenarios, where is that domesticated humour that used to be in a lot of early ▶

DO I WYNNE A PRIZE?

Dear Lloyd
Some days ago I was looking through some of my old ZZAP!s and found an interesting letter in Issue 37. This letter of the month happened to be from a Stuart Wynne. In the reply you said it was the best letter you had ever received. Then I remembered the editor of ZZAP!! is a person called Stuart Wynne! Is this just a coincidence or is the one that wrote the letter in fact the editor of ZZAP!?

In Rrap Issue 63 there was some talk about removing Amiga reviews from ZZAP! I don't own an Amiga and I don't know anybody who does, but nevertheless I enjoy reading Amiga reviews and comparing them to C64 reviews. So, not owning an Amiga doesn't automatically mean you're against having Amiga stuff in ZZAP!

I have some questions I would like you to answer:
1. What kind of thing is the Scorelord?
a. Cyborg (50% human, 50% robot)
b. he was shaving with a lightsword when he was distracted by something so that he accidentally cut himself into small pieces and had to live the rest of his life in a metal body
c. he's just a lunatic who thinks it's carnival every day.
2. Is it possible for you to give me the names of the brilliant, tremendous, fantastic etc etc etc musicians in The Maniacs of Noise?
3. Please, could you bring back Thingie, Nose, Pantomime Horse and the deformed heads. (I'm not the only one who has said this!)
Kristian Holger Pedersen, Denmark.
PS. Hvad synes De oni skriften?

● ***I hope that last bit wasn't rude but I don't speak Danish! As to the writer of that letter (it was in Issue 26, not 37) it was our Ed — by the way he's still a waffler.***
1. a, b and c!
2. Charles Deenan and Jeroen Tel.
3. Unfortunately they're still lost in space, last seen between Rob H's ears!
LM



games (I'm talking about 1984-85 here)? Programmers back then used to think up original ideas for games, rather than just copy known formats. In fact there wasn't really a set standard back then, giving games designers the freedom to manoeuvre without being mocked for stepping out of line. Some of the results were games like **Hover Bover, Bruce Lee, Pyjamarama, Kickstart, Entombed, Zenji, Ball Blazer, Jumpman, Pastfinder** and even **Jack Attack.** The list could go on until say, 1987, when a lot of well known programmers started disappearing and the big companies started dictating what we were allowed to buy and play. Unfortunately if only games buyers read ZZAP! reviews, tried the games before they bought them then only bought the good ones only then could we get the message across to software bigwigs that only good games sell then we'd be alright.

The old saying rings true, in that it is a buyer's market. It is up to the people who buy games to buy the ones worthy of attention and ignore the bad ones. Think as well, if original games were more popular then theoretically prices should come down as money isn't wasted on buying licences or rights to a game in the first place. I dread to think how much some of these deals actually cost. How this situation can be resolved I don't know, perhaps programmers/software houses could concentrate on producing good quality original instead of these licence deals and make everybody happy. Until then people like myself, Mark Neesan and other avid gamesplayers just have to wait for those one-off games to come along and sweep the board.

On a lighter note, **Creatures** the diary is superb, and first impressions of the game are that it is going to do everything I have just been slagging off other programmers for not doing. Original, graphically superb and hopefully oozing with playability. I can't wait! Shame about the house/dance inspired music though Steve... (Ah well, can't please everyone).

Lastly, a request. I am a 64 programmer (and a very bad Amiga one) and having written a commercial game in the past I would like to try and get back into programming in a big way, writing original playable games. I would like to form a team of some sort, so if you can program in assembly, perhaps biased towards graphics and sound and live near North London/Watford area then please drop me a line.

Clark Denham, 8 Rutherford Way, Bushey Heath, Watford, Herts WD2 1NJ.

● ***The reviewers reckon the standard of software hasn't declined. And why you pick such great games as* Xenon II *and* Blood Money *to illustrate your point is a mystery to everyone here. They may not be the most innovative of games but they're certainly very playable — I'm sure a lot of thought went into their gameplay. As for the huge majority of software being coin-op conversions or licences, of the full-price games reviewed in the last three issues over 75% were original including such innovative releases as* Rotox, Turrican, Murder *and* Time Machine.**

***Surely it's just a case of nostalgia: taking my rose-coloured glasses off for a minute, I seem to recall the 'good old days' had more than their fair share of poor games. The trouble is, people tend to forget the mediocre releases of yesteryear, only remembering the classics. You're right about the music industry though; none of the current stars matches up to the likes of* Des O'Connor *and* The Bay City Rollers!**

LM

HOT GAMES?

Dear Lloyd
I would like to start off by congratulating you on a brilliant mag. I have recently arrived in Denmark from South Africa and found that piracy is legal here. I find it very strange that when most of the world and especially Europe are trying to combat piracy, a few countries here are actually promoting it.

There is a local newspaper here in Denmark that has a section that allows people to sell pirated games, as long as they are sold above Dkr20, that is about £1.80. Here I could buy games such as **Rotox, Unreal** and **Turrican** for only £1.80 and sometimes even before their announced release dates.

Then there are a few piracy companies as well. The newest one is called Amiga Software Denmark. They have monthly news letters, and for just 300 kroner, or £27, you can receive 30 disks with all the latest games from that month.

Anyway please print this letter, as I would like a reply as to what to do. Should I buy from these companies or not? Are they really legal or not? Have FAST and ELSPA become lazy and forgotten about the piracy war? Keep up the good work!

Bjorn, Denmark.
PS. Hi to Ralf, Ralph, Clen and Ashley in S.A. Enjoy the holidays.

● ***Bob Hay of FAST informs me that these 'piracy companies' are operating illegally. The trouble is that FAST's operations are limited to the UK. Apparently there is a similar organisation in Denmark though this deals mainly with business software. However, if you would like to contact FAST — on* 0628 660 377 *(plus international dialling code) — they will be able to inform their Danish counterparts of the situation.***

LM

TOTAL TURTLE

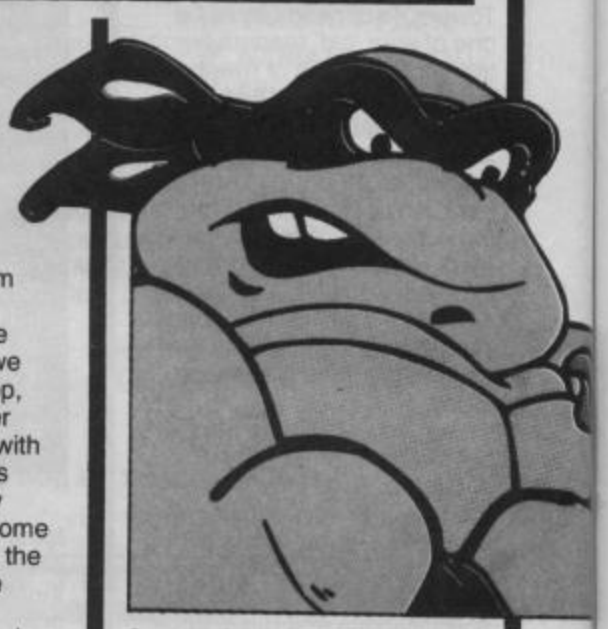
Cowabunga Shredder, erm Lloyd
As you know us turtles are getting very famous and we even have our own coin-op, which is great. But Splinter won't keep supplying me with the dosh to play it so I was wondering if there are any plans to convert it to my home com (C64). If so, who has the licence and when will it be released?

Aside a pizza and a good old fight with Shredder your mag is the best thing around. But why on why are the classifieds being axed? I know you said it's for piracy reasons but instead of stopping the section just don't let any ads for selling software in. That would stop doods from peddling pirated games. By stopping the section you will also (as you know) lose the money doods would have paid to get their ad in so I hope the mag doesn't go downhill 'cos of a lack of cash.

The larger previews section (ish 64) was totally awesome and is one way to increase page numbers. Tell the doods in charge of that bit to keep up the good work.

Right, about the Ed. It was Shredder, Bee-Bop and Rock Steady (following Crang's orders) who almost killed him. Us turtles tried to apprehend him and the guys but we ran into some foot soldiers and Leonardo got shell shock and Splinter got a bit rattled but we'll get him. If there is anything we hate more than anchovies it's Shredder so we'll get him by using our T-U-R-T-L-E POWER!
Chill-out Doods!!!

(Stral) Michaelangelo Turtle, The Old Sewer, Holytown.



● ***Mirrorsoft are set to release* Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles *in late November. By the way, can I join your gang? Granny said she'd knit me a turtleneck sweater!***

LM

★ **'...Oh you can do anything but lay offa my blue suede shoes.' Thank yah sincerely, ladies and gentlemen. Ah'd like to do a little request nah, so just send 'em in ta *Newsfield, Elvis Mangram, ZZAP! Rrap, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.* And if yah see me in the local supermarket, please don't tell the papers.**

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CHASE 2 GETS TURBO-CHARGED!

"With each level there's a lot of memory changes, using the 64K to the full each load."

Last year US Gold rushed out *Turbo Out Run* to effortlessly burn up *Chase HQ* on the C64, and embarrass Amiga *Chase* as well. But now the *Turbo* programmers are working for Ocean on the *Chase* sequel — *Special Criminal Investigation*. With weeks of development time still to go, one thing is certain — *SCI* is this year's unstoppable product. A virtuoso display of programming skills and graphical genius, *SCI* is the game ROBIN HOGG is drooling over.

● *Special Criminal Investigation* revamps the original cops-and-robbers coin-op by handing out lots of guns. Broady and Gibson can now blast the baddies off the road rather than denting their lovely new sports car. But the villains are packing guns themselves, some are even escorted by Hells Angels bikes, and two have abandoned their expensive sports cars for a massive truck and a helicopter!

As with *Turbo*, the Amiga version is in the hands of the Scottish-based programming team ICE, while the C64 game is being done by Probe Software. The latter project involves Steve Crow and Mark Kelly, but this time Mark is only a technical advisor with the actual programming in the hands of Grant Harrison. I asked Steve how he approached the project after leaving *Golden Axe*?

"The first thing we did was take

★ Nagging Nancy has been replaced by curvy Karen.





★ Nope, it's not an April Fool we've seen this one moving. Two helicopters, one sports car, all moving as fast as Turbo!

a look at the arcade machine. When someone asked us if we'd seen the new *Chase HQ* coin-op, the licence was up for grabs and we thought it might make a good game. We took a look at it in a crowded arcade and thought it looked very impressive. After we got the machine in, over Easter — in fact the worst time possible — we found that it's very playable.'

Did Ocean have any bad feelings since *Turbo* beat *Chase HQ* into the ground?

'No, they were impressed enough by *Turbo* to sign us up. I haven't seen *Chase* on the C64 but someone said it wasn't too hot. *SCI* is much more playable, each section of the game is interconnected with a story about rescuing Jennifer from a warehouse.

'I had to photograph the game all the way through, like we did with *Turbo* and *Golden Axe* while Grant drove through the game, slowing down at set points to take photos.

'I'm doing the main game graphics and little bits of the presentation — another person is responsible for the rest.'

Were any graphics brought across from *Turbo* given the game similarity?

'There may be one or two graphics in there similar to *Turbo* — the Porsche is similar but it's redrawn from the coin-op, the odd bush maybe — but near all of it has been done from scratch.

'There's four lanes to it as well, the car is slightly smaller than the *Turbo* Ferrari which makes the game much more playable, allowing for a bigger playing area and much more accuracy. One of the things about *SCI* is that it's a road racing blast-'em-up.

'There's six levels: five normal levels and the last level where you're up against a vicious time limit with no continue-plays. You can afford to crash only once — it's a tough game. And when you do complete the game, you see there's about 30 people credited with working on the coin-op, all using dedicated hardware — and there was just the four of us!'

Are you going to do another race game?

'I think we've done enough of the race game theme to be honest, we just like challenges, it's like climbing a mountain and then climbing a few stones.' (!)

Grant Harrison is best known for last month's Sizzling *Murder*, but before that he worked on C64 versions of *V*, *Underwurlde*, some budget stuff and *Savage* with Probe (and Steve).

I asked Grant if *SCI* wasn't a big change from *Murder*?

'Very much so, *Murder* was, in fact, the first 16-bit game I've done. Before that I just spent the time learning about the Amiga, what you can do and can't do with the machine. I'm in a partnership with Jason Kingsley and when *SCI* came along I thought why not?'

Although *SCI* does look similar to *Turbo*, just how much technical assistance did you receive from Mark?

'It was really only the ideas. At the start of the project I sat down with him and he explained how he constructed the road routine, the curves, how he approached the problems. With Mark Kelly's technical assistance, writing *Chase HQ 2* was made somewhat easier than starting from scratch. That was the catalyst for my work. I had access to the code to work out how he did things but *SCI* is a totally original product of mine; I'm using his idea but improving on them in many places. For example, for the bars on the road Mark used rasters, instead I used NMIs with the rasters used for the plexor.'

Freeing the sprite plexor allowed Grant to cope with a feature of the coin-op not present in its predecessor, namely some huge graphics of a lorry (complete with barrels coming out the back) and a massive attack helicopter on level five.



★ Amiga SCI is being done by Scottish programming house, ICE.

'Getting in the size of helicopter and the lorry, which was 4x4 sprites, was a problem. The main problem, though, was getting more cars on the road. In *Turbo Out Run* there was you and one other; with *SCI* there could be up to eight, motorbikes too, throwing grenades and stuff. I've got round the problem with two cars appearing as you draw near the bad guy — it won't let the other cars or the bad guy appear until you've destroyed the first two.

'After coding some parts, I would take it up to Probe for a progress report. Mark might say this or that looked nice, but if I wasn't happy I might change it. We'd knock ideas around, it's all my original product.'

How much memory did Steve have for graphics and the rest?

'I gave Steve as much as I had left: in total 32K or so which,

★ Level five sees the criminals rolling out the barrels.





★ Ray Broady stands up to take aim at some unlucky criminals.

when you think about the number of side graphics, soon goes. The large opponents on level five [the lorry and helicopter again] had 54 sprite definitions alone. With each level there's a lot of memory changes, using the 64K to the full each load. I haven't spoken with the people responsible for the tape loading system so I don't know what it is going to be like.'

How long did you have to write *SCI*?

'16 weeks — a pretty tight schedule, and I played the coin-op for a total of two hours. I had the video though.

If you did a cartridge version of *SCI* what would you put in, the stuff that you left out of the conversion?

'Well, there'd be more side graphics and more types of cars because there's a maximum of two at any one time, each car being 2x2 sprites when they're real close — any others I just had to get rid of.'



★ Once again Probe recreate the entire coin-op intro sequence.

Are you keeping other little things like the waves when you're going across the bridge, or were they out from the start?

'Yes, that was one that had to go, they didn't lend anything to the game itself. The important thing about the game is the playability. I'd rather have a playable game than one with features that are unnecessary. I've finished the game, just tweaking the gameplay and putting in some presentation screens. The Maniacs of Noise provided the effects and a main tune to play throughout the game.'

Is there any part of the program, or piece of coding that you're particularly proud of?

'I was quite pleased how well level five came out with the chopper and the lorry with all those sprites and it all moving as well. Those two graphics used a lot of memory when you're racing along.'

I take it *SCI* IS faster than *Turbo*?

'Yes even without the nitro, there isn't any point in the game when it isn't.'

★ Speeding through a city where the incredibly dull Dick Tracy is still on at the cinema!



"Getting in the size of helicopter and the lorry, which was 4x4 sprites, was a problem."

Ocean's *SCI* is due out in November for both C64 and Amiga.

HE'S BACK... TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT

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CREATURE FEATURE

Once again, the Apex posse are here — doin' our own thang. That's right, we're back, vibin' it up in what will probably be the penultimate instalment! So, as we pad out this sentence to fill this box, we'll get on with letting you know what we did (and didn't do) this month.

MONDAY JULY 16TH

Spent the entire day typing up last month's diary! The problem was that it was mega-hot outside and we were inside... boohoo.

TUESDAY JULY 17TH

John: The worst time to be a programmer is when we have weather like this. Not a cloud in the sky and we're stuck behind computers all day (ho-hum). So, pressing on with work I've been adjusting the Alien Editor again (there was a screenshot of it a couple of issues back). This time I've been adding the option to say whether an alien has one of the standard C64 colours or one of my 'new and improved' colours. You can't just say the alien is to have a non-64 colour, you must mix up a new one from the present 16 — which often proves great fun (loadsapurples).

Steve: A few issues back I mentioned that for the first level of the game Clyde would use armbands to progress through the sections of water. However, this has now changed, as the idea wasn't properly thought out (as usual) and consequently we ran into an incurable problem. So after spending all that time designing the animations of Clyde doing the front crawl (which did look really good with some neat splashing water animations), I had to change the control mode. It's now been decided that Clyde will stand on some lilies that float on the surface of the water, then pull out his 'Acme Compact Electric Fan' and be blown along.



FRIDAY JULY 20TH

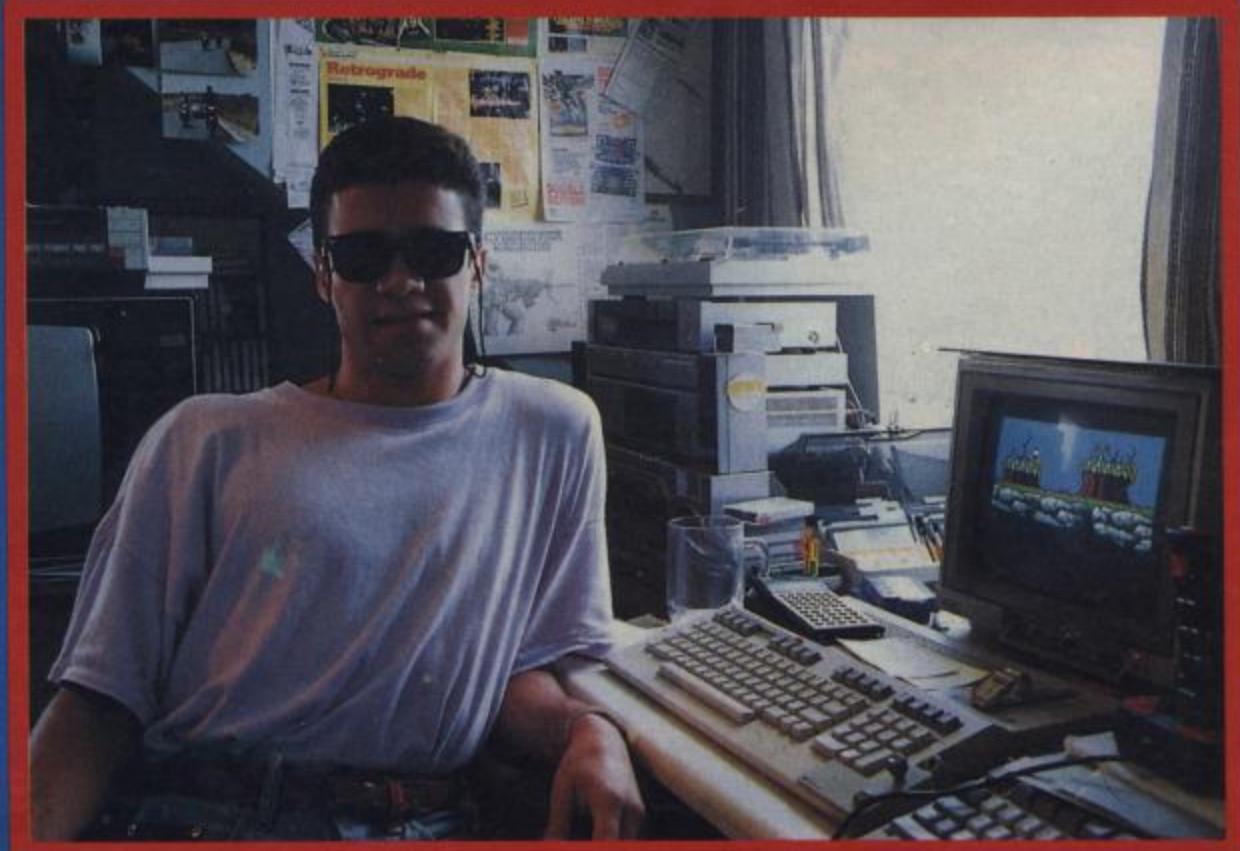
John: The UMOVE routine has been under some serious restructuring the last couple of days. I'm now buried under reams of printing paper. UMOVE moves Clyde around the screen, telling the scroll routine when to scroll and when not to, and handles the different control modes. The problem was it could only manage one control mode (ie swimming under water). I needed a different control for each level, so I had to rip it apart, modify it and put it all back together again. But it's done now, allowing me to incorporate as many new modes as I like, which are located within each level (therefore I never have more than the one I'm using in memory at once).

Steve: Now we have come up with the new control mode, all I have to do are the animations. I started off with the lily which tips up and down when he changes speed, then designed Clyde standing on top of it and added the 'Acme Fan' in his hand. Aliens for the Graveyard level were the next thing I did. There is a spooky two-sprite high skeleton, and I'm working on some cute little 'fuzzy-eating' goblins.

TUESDAY JULY 24TH

John: I've been messing around with the scroll speed lately, taking it up to 8 pixels every 50th of a second — which is a tad fast to be playable! The standard in-game speed is... wait for it... 1 pixel a 50th (fanfare! (how slow can you get (and how many brackets can I open in one sentence (it looks like four)))). Clyde has only got short legs ya see, so making the scroll go any faster than that would make it look like he's sliding. But when he jumps on a lily which is on the water, you've got to consider

★ Steve wisely puts on his shades before John mixes some more colours.



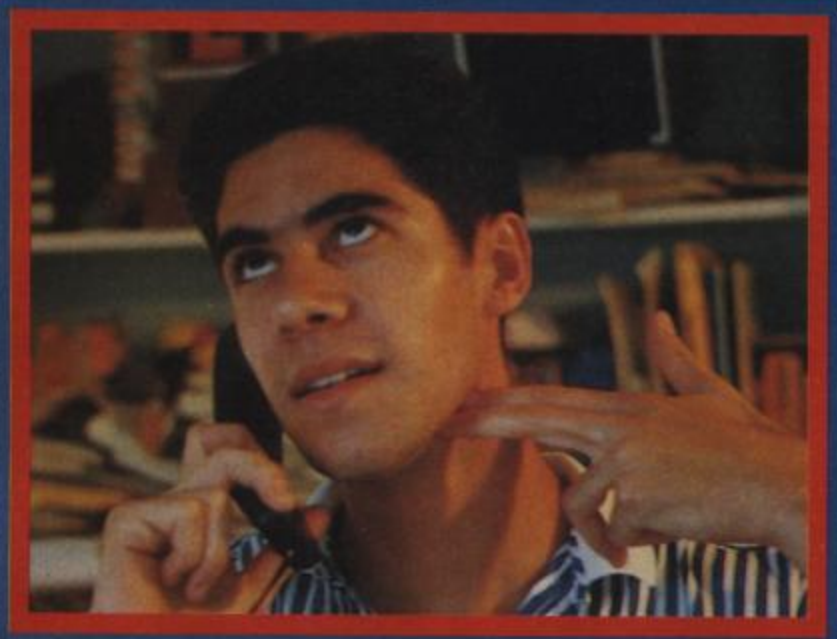
the current (well we have, anyway). As the water flows from left to right (and then down a waterfall), Clyde should move faster when he goes right, right? So I again modified my UMOVE routine to cope with this, but noticed that the aliens aren't getting sequenced properly. Looks like another debugging session is rapidly approaching!

Steve: Today is a music day. First off was the level background music for the Graveyard level, so naturally it is spooky (with bass 'n' drums) and even though it took about 3 hours to get a small bit of it done, it was worth it. While I was playing around with some notes and basses for the Graveyard level I came up with some real funky stuff which was turning into the start of a good piece of music: even though it had no role yet I'm sure we will use it in the future. I often get side-tracked during the composing of music and, as before, the original piece of music gets left to start the new bit. This sometimes happens to bits of music that were side-tracks of other music (if you see what I mean).

FRIDAY 27TH JULY

John: What? It's the 27th — not the 13th! How can this happen? Steve will explain later. Anyway, think I've fixed the 'alien sequence' bug(s).

We came up with the idea of making the waterfall roar yesterday. When I say roar I don't mean a 'ROAR with clenched teeth', I mean a quiet roar of 'water cascading down rocks' sort of thing. As Clyde gets closer to the fall the roar will get louder, and as he passes it'll get quieter. This will only happen if the player (you) decide not to have music playing for that part of the level.



★ John learns that ZZAP! wants a Megatape demo!

Received another demo disk from Mark Bishop today, wish we could have seen it....

Steve: This morning I was doing the piece of music that I mentioned earlier but got bored with it so I saved it to disk and decided to continue doing the aliens for the waterfall level. Unfortunately when I came to load the editor it wouldn't, Ahhhhh! My disk had corrupted and I've lost all the aliens — or so I thought. I tried another disk and the same thing happened, and the same on another one. This made me think maybe the disks were alright and maybe the disk drive was at fault or even the C128. We checked out the drive using the C64, it worked perfectly. Oh Dear! The C128 has died, blown up, crashed, gone down, blown its top, Doesn't Work!... Andy Smith said he knew a computer doctor, so we took it down to the surgery where the poor thing was put on a life support machine until further notice. The doctors were very helpful and comforting, they're looking for the problem and then with a bit of luck, the cure.

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 1ST: DEADLINE FOR CREATURES

John: Ooops, we're a bit behind schedule (a lot behind schedule — but I didn't say that). It'll be some time yet before the game's done! So it's a big SORRY to Dave at Thalamus and the lads at ZZAP! (we'll get U a review copy by Xmas, okay?)

Luckily Thalamus are the sort of company that would prefer a great game late, than a rushed game on time! What lovely people to work for (if that isn't sucking up, I don't

★ The waterfall on level one: its sound will get louder as you approach, and fade as you leave.



know what is). The C128 is still comatose at the moment. Actually, it turns out that the guy fixing it (hopefully) used to repair Sensi Soft's computers when they used to live near here. Is it a small world or wot?

Steve: As the C128 is unfortunately occupying a 'luxury private room' at the hospital, I've not had a lot to do to the game, so I'm going to use one of the Amigas. Sampled sound is on the agenda and this is much better than the 64. If only the Amiga had several more voices, a slightly better sound chip and maybe a 96 track mixing deck chucked in, the music would be up to record industry standard (we can but dream).

I've been so engrossed in Amiga music that I nearly forgot about the C128, but I just managed to get to the hospital in visiting hours with my bowl of fruit and bunch of flowers — still no change in condition.

MONDAY AUGUST 6TH

John: Dave phoned asking if we could do a ZZAP! megatape of a torture screen. He also wanted to know if ZZAP! could have a review copy of the game. Demo yes, review no. Not our fault if the game's not ready for review yet. (Actually it is, but.... erm... well... err...)

Dave also told us he's ordered the furry bugs which are going to be sold with the game — what value for money (what value for money?). There's going to be some at the computer show in September as well, so all rush to the Thalamus stand and pick one up. If you see us there come and say hi/hello/yo/awlright/watcha/how ya doin' etc etc.

Just like to give a big 'YO' to Creative Design, who have the all-clear to start the 16-bit conversions of Creatures. (Apologies to Pieter from Softeyes — we'll see ya at the show).

Steve: YaaaaHoooooo! The C128 is alive, restored to prime condition — Thanks Doc KPR micro. So no more Amiga music for a while, it's back to work on *Creatures*. John's started the level loading section so it's my job to do the graphics for it but, wait a minute, there's something wrong with my C128... Ahh, it's only the shift key that doesn't work, but I'll soon fix that — where's me screwdriver? (I got an 'O'level in electronics don't-ye-know).

After taking the C128 apart for the second time and cleaning the connections under the right shift key (which is no quick or easy task), I got straight back to work on the level loading screen. This, at the moment, features a 'U'-shaped tube similar to a barometer, with the time elapsed on one side and the time remaining on the other.

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 8TH

John: Work on the game has YET AGAIN come to a standstill. This time it's the megatape demo to blame. I've got a torture screen to chuck on, but have decided not to include the 'Level Complete' sequence. Don't want to give away everything, do we now? So you'll just have to play the game to see it! (It's quite good actually). (It's brill! — Ed) So, instead of just ripping out the Level Complete code and giving the torture screen to the lads at ZZAP!, I'm going to replace it with a little 'Demo Complete' sequence. I've already filled the screen with colour splits, all I've got to do now is print a 'wot a hero'-type message somewhere. Don't know how I'll make it appear though! It'll probably be something flash — I'll think about it later and finish it tomorrow.

Steve: I had an idea to make the loading screen more colourful by putting a shading sky effect in the background. When the finished version was done it was a bit overwhelming to say the least, so I ripped it out and for the moment its back to the old screen. John mentioned that he was changing the 'level complete' message in the demo to a 'demo complete' message, so naturally there needs to be another bit of music for that. If you don't think it's too hot then don't blame me because I was going to change it but I was outvoted to leave it be (huh, that's democracy for you). Some of you may even recognise it, but it's only a demo and not the finished game so I think we'll get away with it.

MONDAY AUGUST 13TH

John: I completed the 'demo complete' sequence a few days ago, and today I'm getting a disk together ready to post to ZZAP!

I've noticed the collision detection is slightly hard on the player, but it's already gone into the demo. I'll make a note to change it for the finished game. The disk also contains some screen shots of the game at various stages (in the shops etc).

Also sent a long overdue demo disk to Mark Bishop (our apologies again Mark — for being overdue, not for the demos).

Last Friday Andy Roberts came all the way down from St Helens (*Insects In Space?*) near Liverpool. He was up at 5am to get here by lunchtime! Being a Friday, we just had to go to a club, and by the time we got back it was 3 am (Saturday, obviously). So he was pretty shattered to say the least, and a tad smashed as well (too much Tennants Super for him methinks). Anyway, I now had to send him a demo disk too. So ONCE AGAIN the game was barely touched as I spent most of the day backing-off the game and saving it to countless numbers of disks! I'm glad our stock of Jiffy envelopes is still high though.

Steve: On the Saturday Andy was down here we thought a day out at Southend seafront would be nice (and the frequent trips to the town centre for some junk food). We had a sort of sleep in before we went as we had to recover from Friday night's clubbing. I got up about 10am but Andy was awake at about 6am (ravin' mad).

We invited Andy Smith as well as Andy Roberts to go to Southend with us (isn't he lucky?). We all piled in the car and set off in the boiling hot weather, just right for walking along the seafront. We had a good time in the arcades with me playing *Airbuster* and *Megablast*, I also got to the final screen of *Mr Wardner* and died (as usual). One of the best of the few new games around was *Smash TV* by Williams, which is a real laugh with two players.

One of the most frequently visited places (apart from McDonalds) was the pub, which sure hit the spot, even though it did take 10 minutes to get through the queue.

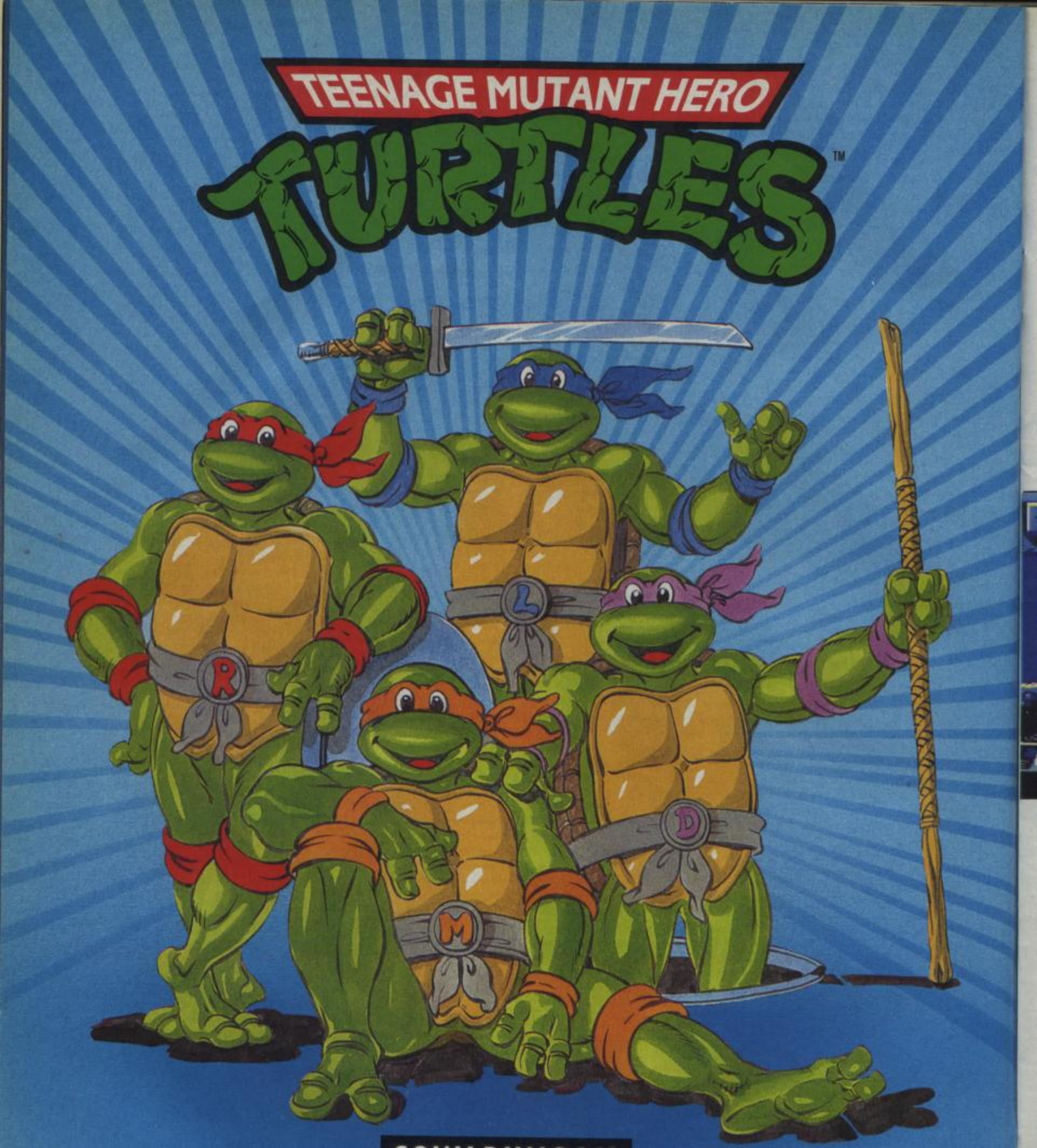
The day soon came to an end so we travelled home and shortly after arriving here, took Andy back to the station so he could go home. Unknown to us, Andy missed the train from Euston to Liverpool and had to wait a few hours for the next one (what a shame!).

Well that's about it for this month. We're off to Majorca in 7 days' time but we'll be thinking of you when we're lying on the beach catching some rays (not the dangerous ones, hopefully) and will return to bring you... 'The Diary Of A Good Time' in the next issue.

★ Uhm... well, I don't think I want the Super Droopy!



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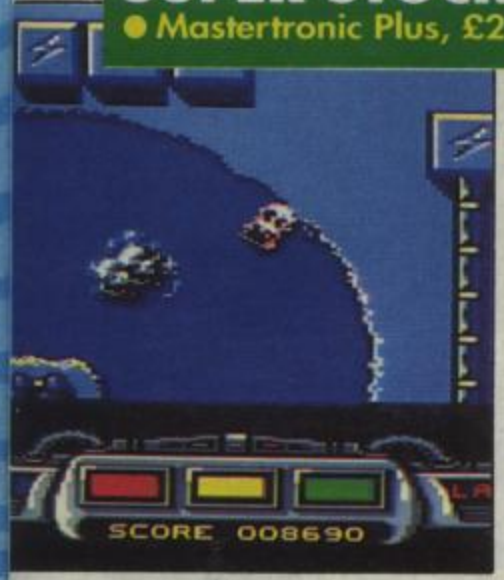
BLITZ!

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SUPER STOCK CAR

● Mastertronic Plus, £2.99



Well, this is embarrassing. I mean this is the bit of the review which extracts all the useful information from the instructions and presents it for your entertainment and enlightenment. But *Super Stock Car* comes with instructions for another game! A choice of four cars, a track designer and weapons such as cannon and mines are all things you *won't* find in *Super Stock Car*.

What you will find is an overhead-view *Super Sprint*-style race game. Your car has to come first after a varying number of laps of a scrolling track in competition with three other cars. And that's about it really. We've been through the six not very different circuits, but after a few goes we understood why Mastertronic wrote about a different game — this one is extremely boring. The graphics are nice enough, the sound isn't bad, but gameplay is very, very repetitive. Extremely repetitive, in fact. The only thing that changes is the colour and layout of the track — no bridges or jumps or anything to add variety. And the instructions are a pack of fibs. Avoid.

OVERALL 27%

DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

● The Hit Squad, £2.99 (Rerelease)



Yes it's more waggling whoopee with Daley competing in the ten events of the Olympic decathlon. Believe it or not, this is even more strenuous than the original *DT's Decathlon* with joystick waggling required in every single event! And there's more waggling before you even start the game proper: in the gym Daley must waggle to do as many exercises as possible to fill up his Lucozade bottle (?!). Before any event he can choose to use this extra energy to help him. Footwear also makes a difference to the toughness of the events: Daley has ten pairs of trainers to choose from, each specially made for one event (anyway his feet probably get a bit whiffy with all that running!).

Olympic Challenge is definitely the most aesthetically pleasing of the DT series, with a large, well animated Daley in the gym section and decent graphics and FX in the actual events. It's a pity then that there's so much waggling with no 'easier' events to have a rest on. Also, you only get three attempts to qualify on an event, failure sending you right back to the first event.

I remember vividly when this was originally released to coincide with the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Then, Daley snapped his vaulting pole; now, you're just as likely to break your joystick.

OVERALL 65%

FIRST STRIKE

● Encore, £2.99 (Rerelease)

'If *Iron Eagle* were a computer game, this would be it', claimed Elite to hype this all-out arcade game upon its release in October '89. The scenario pits a single F-16 pilot against eight missions, from nuclear subs in the Black Sea to Russian stealth bases. Gameplay recalls *Afterburner*, with you viewing the action from behind your aircraft as plenty of scenery whizzes past at great speed. But in a touch particularly appreciated by Robin Hogg, before each mission you get a choice of weaponry. Mavericks for ground targets, Sidewinders for aircraft and either an ECM pod or a fuel tank on the centreline pylon. This tactical element adds to the game depth, and all the missions are quite lengthy with the jet landing at a base midway through.



Robin predictably raved over it, 'Anything with planes in its gets my vote... *First Strike* is everything *Afterburner* should have been with a lot more to boot. The graphic effect is stunning... an ongoing battle through the missions is a nice touch... I love it!' A few readers wrote in to agree, arguing it should have been a Sizzler, but Ed Stuart had some reservations: 'A good arcade game then, but lacking variety for heavy duty home play.' Less than a year later, the graphics are still spectacular — nothing has come close to matching it, certainly not *Galaxy Force* — and gameplay is much better value for money at budget price. If you still haven't got this, now's your chance for a great mix of amazing graphics and varied missions.

OVERALL 90%



BUDGET!

SALAMANDER
● The Hit Squad, £2.99 (Rerelease)

Salamander comes from the days when arcade games were original and imaginative, an all-time classic which was one of the first to introduce pick-up capsules to increase firepower. It's one of the Welshman's favourite games, but since he's off on his saucy hols with Blodwyn, it's up to me to rave about this superb Ocean conversion!

The complex Japanese plot involves the five planets of the Latis system. Their ancient civilization was able to look into the future and predict its annihilation at the hands of the forces of Salamander. Once again a single pilot with three ships (or lives), must take on a massive alien force. The Salamander's forces are spread over four levels in the conversion (rather than five in the coin-op), but each level is made up of several different landscapes. What's more, while most of the levels are horizontally scrolling, level two scrolls vertically!

At the end of each level there's a mega-monster, but other monsters are just as impressive: such as massive gnashing teeth, beautiful jumping flames on the volcano level, large swinging arms and self-healing walls!





There's also wave after wave of enemy ships, some of which drop a pick-up capsule when destroyed. These capsules can provide a shield, triple-fire, speed-up, missiles, up to three multiples to follow you around and much more.

Back in ZZAP! 41 *Salamander* earned a Sizzler with 94%. Gordon Houghton said 'The graphic definition is as close to the arcades as you could get on a 64, and is matched by slick sprite movement across detailed, smooth-scrolling backgrounds... easily the best progressive shoot-'em-up I've ever played.' Maff Evans agreed; 'It has gorgeous graphics, is astoundingly addictive, and is destined to become another classic 64 shoot-'em-up.' Almost two years later the game still astonishes with its graphic brilliance — comparing well to *Blood Money* — and superlative playability. The only slight drawback is the multiload (it can obviously be frustrating dying on the first bullet of level two), but at this price this superb game simply cannot be missed.

OVERALL 94%

RASTAN SAGA
● The Hit Squad, £2.99 (Rerelease)

This Taito coin-op takes place on the mythical continent of Maranna, ruled by King Rastan. After failing to dethrone Rastan, the evil sorcerer Karg has unleashed all the demons on hell upon Maranna. Rastan obviously doesn't believe in armies or anything, because it's down to him alone to defeat the demons across six countries (or loads).

The game itself consists of a fairly nice landscape scrolling horizontally, and occasionally vertically, as Rastan hacks his way through such mythologically inspired creatures as griffins and flying demons. There are also various icons scattered about which can be picked up. These include a shield, mantle and armour (all of which reduce damage), medicine and a ram's head (which both replenish energy), jewels (bonus points) and a rod which allows you to fire firebolts from your sword. Needless to say there's a super-baddie at the end of each level.

Originally an Imagine conversion, *Rastan* earned just 42% back in Issue 35. Julian Rignall thought the main sprite was 'sluggish... and the difficulty level is completely unbalanced: the action is either mind-numbingly easy, or amazingly hard. Guiding Rastan over the landscape is simple, but the ropes and and end-of-level guardians provide almost impassable barriers.' With the aid of Issue 41's tips — eg the rope swings further every fifth time — the game becomes a bit more playable. But not much, this is a rather dull, repetitive game.

OVERALL 51%



SPAGHETTI WESTERN
● Zeppelin Games, £2.99

'This town ain't big enough fer the both of us! 'Cause the council have refused plannin' permission for ma bungalow!' So now, as Clint Westband, a notorious bounty hunter, you're stalking through five of the toughest Wild West towns, jangling your spurs and looking for action. In horizontally scrolling levels, figures step out from doorways or pop their heads up through windows. If they're civilians, ignore them; if they're nasty gunmen, blow them away — before they do the same to you.

Objects are scattered over the town's ground and include ammo, money, food (for energy), keys (for doors, naturally) and a protective jacket. However, moving objects such as barrels and horseshoes reduce your energy if they're not avoided.

Spaghetti Western is much in the style of previous C64 Wild West and shoot-out games. As a Sheriff in Accolade's *Law Of The West*, you had to negotiate with excitable characters to avoid first-person perspective gunfights, then in Gremlin's *West Bank* you had to quickly decide whether people bursting through doorways were friend or foe. To kill or be killed is the main prerogative here, although the shooting style is similar to *Cabal* and there are objects to gather and slight exploration.

Graphics are old-fashioned, backgrounds blocky with very few colours and pop-up people in monochrome. The player sprite is almost as weak but is animated in an amusing, Postman Pat manner. Loading music is jolly and appropriate to the scenario but effects are plain. Gameplay is tricky, shooting people impossible if you're not in the right place when they appear, energy draining quickly and only one life. Altogether an unsatisfying trip back in time to the days of simple-looking and playing games.

OVERALL 67%



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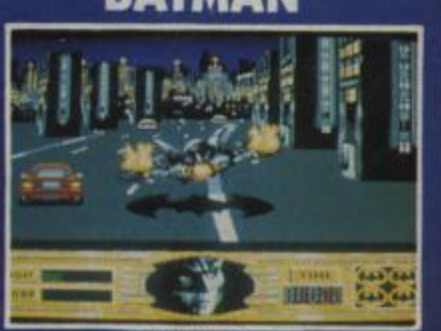
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ZZAP! MEGATAPE 10 INSTRUCTIONS!

FOXX FIGHTS BACK

● (Imageworks)

OBJECTIVE

You and your mate are running out of food and, being the main provider for the set, you have to go out and get the shopping. There are a variety of foodstuffs scattered across the landscape, you have to collect them and return to your ever hungry wife. Along the way there are all manner of nasty creatures attempting to stop you from getting on with your tasks, or even simply on the lookout for a quick snack. You are armed with your trusty pistol and thus are able to fight back against the voracious hounds.

CONTROL

Keyboard
M Left
, Right
Q Up
A Down
1-9 Fire (Any numeric key is fire)

F1 Music/Sound effects
F2 Pause On/Off

Joystick
In port 2

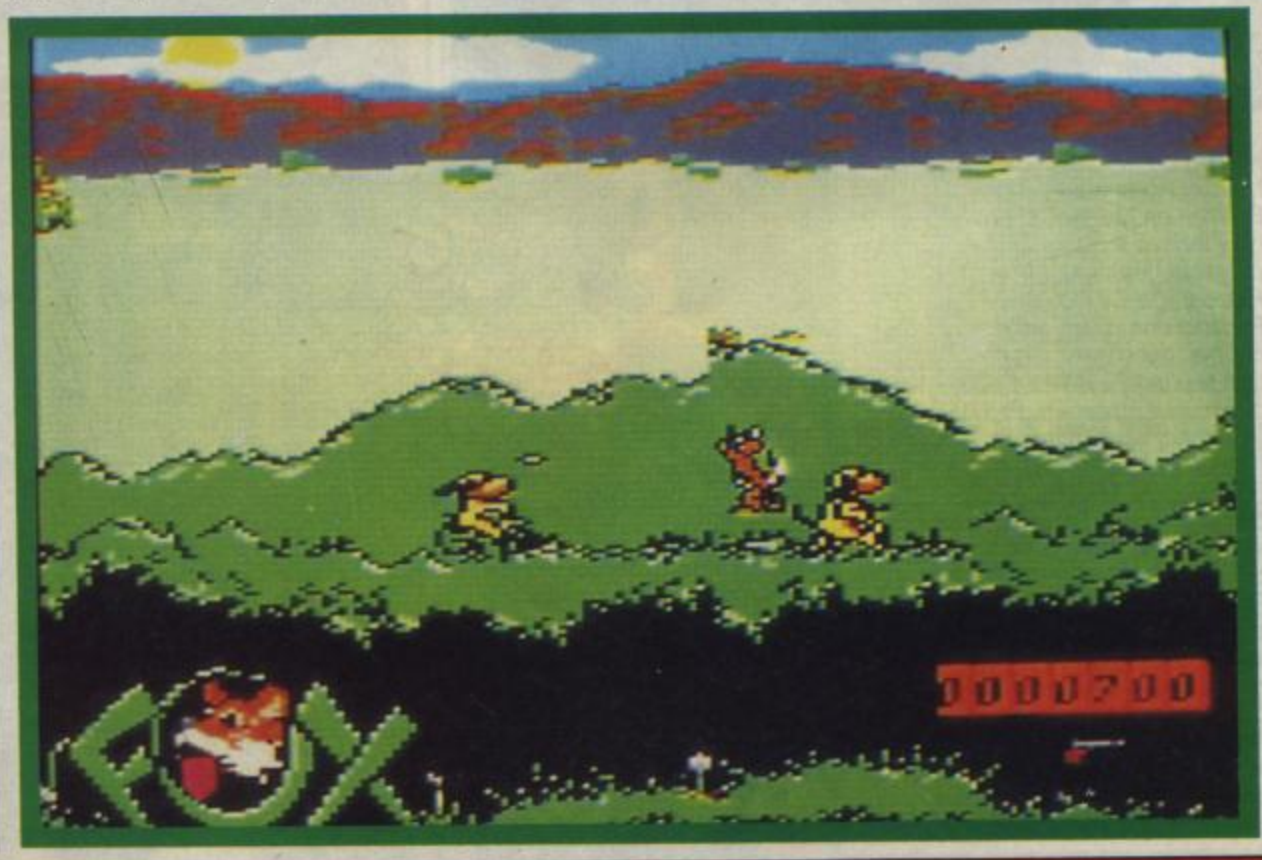
To jump press up and fire together. Note that you cannot jump underground. To get off walls etc jump.
To go up slopes: press the up and the required direction together.
To enter burrows: press the down key whilst standing in front of the entrance.

There are four types of weapon in the game. When you have the most powerful (and the hardest to get), the machine gun, you will be able to walk and fire at the same time. To run press the down key and then the required direction key. Note that whilst you have this weapon, you can only jump from the running position.

The word 'FOX' in the bottom left hand corner of the screen contains your pantometer. This represents how the fox is feeling by the length of his tongue. Every time the fox is hurt his stamina is reduced and after a while his tongue begins to hang out, if it gets too long the fox dies. You must avoid jumping into walls as this will also kill the fox. The fox will drown if he falls into the water. When you have lost a life the screen will scroll back to the beginning of the current section of the map.

You must shoot the enemies and avoid contact with them or their fire. You start out armed





with a pistol which has a slow rate of fire and is not very accurate. At various points in the game there are other weapons to be found that have varying characteristics. You can pick these up by just running or jumping into them.

During the game you will come across different kinds of food. These are of two types: collectible and edible.

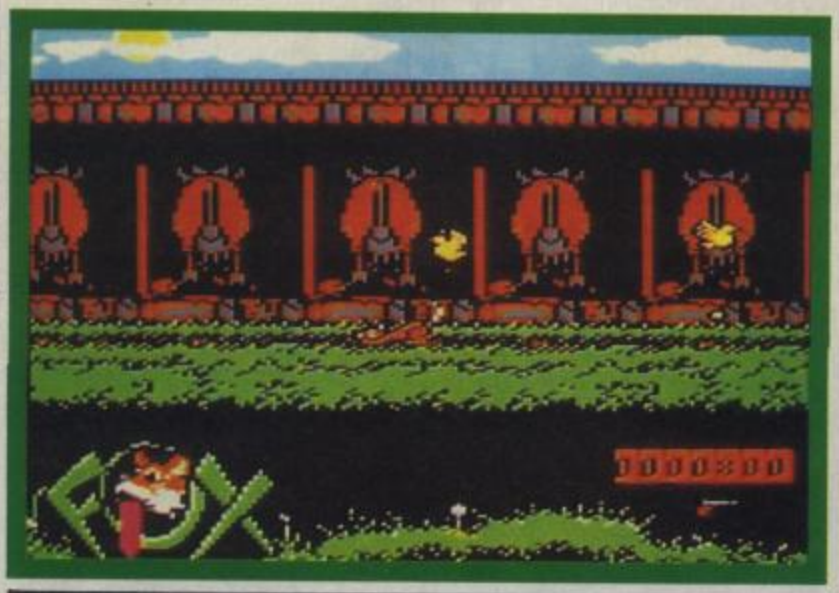
Collectible: These are the various items that your wife has sent you out to retrieve. Sausages, apples, pies and the like. You can only carry four at a time, the ones that you are currently carrying are displayed on the status line. You are rewarded for taking food home to the vixen by having your stamina restored.

Edible: Throughout the game there are coops full of nesting chickens and burrows full of sleeping bunnies. These can all be eaten for extra points and extra stamina.

Some of the burrows are short cuts that allow you to get home quickly. Once you have gone through a short cut one way, that route stays open, providing easy access between the current section of the map and home.

You start the game with three lives: there's one extra life per level in the shape of a huntsman's horn.

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CREATURES: THE PLAYABLE TORTURE SCREEN DEMO

● (Apex/Thalamus)

Having bopped to the beat of the housey Apex Music Select System on Megatape 8 you can now thrill to this wonderful, playable demo by the Apex *Retrograde* Computer Productions boys: wonderful, of course, because it's rather sick and twisted (should be right down your street eh, Phil?).

The Torture Screen is part of Apex's game *Creatures* (to be released by Thalamus and currently being Diary-ed in this very ZZAP!). It follows the antics of furry hero Clyde as Clyde Radcliff Exterminates All The Unfriendly, Repulsive, Earth-ridden Slime (C.R.E.A.T.U.R.E.S. of course!). After each level Clyde comes to a scene where a fellow Clyde has to be rescued from all manner of fiendish, death-dealing, gruesome, gut-churning devices. In this completely playable demo you have to save Chaz from not only being sliced in half by an Acme Sawmill but also a 200,000 volt electric spark.

We'll leave you to work out how to save Chaz from the Saw and the Spark but we *will* reveal that you need the Sawmill switch, the glass of water and the carton of nuts to complete it (what no sticky backed plastic? — Wozza). Good luck and watch out for the game and review very soon.

Controls:
Joystick (in Port 2)

Holding down the Fire Button and pulling Down on the joystick brings up the weapon selection screen. Cycle left and right between the weapons (two in this demo) and release Down to use the chosen weapon. Hold down Fire and release it for Clyde to breathe fire.

Unauthorised copying, hiring, lending, stamping up and down on, public performance and broadcasting of the Creatures Torture Screen Demo is prohibited.
© 1990 Thalamus.



SCORPION

● (Rack-It)

SCENARIO
The new Scorpion battle machine has just been designed and needs to be put to the test. It has been given the task of stopping a simulated sabotage of modern oil refinery. If successful, it will be included in the country's main defences.

You have been given the job of getting the tank through this test by its creators.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS
You are advised to disconnect all hardware from your computer. Connect the cassette player to the computer, place the cassette in the player and rewind if necessary. Press the SHIFT and RUN STOP keys on the computer keyboard and press



the Play key on the cassette player. The game takes a few minutes to load.

CONTROLS
Joystick only with usual controls.

GAMEPLAY
Manoeuvre your Scorpion tank over the pipeline network trying to destroy the two bomb layers (the jelly-type alien), but you must also collect all the time bombs left on the pipes before their timers detonate (you have 60 seconds to achieve this) to complete each level. On later levels, the pipes open and close to hinder you even more and as a bonus, for each bomb diffused, you are given an extra 5 seconds.

CREDITS
Program design and programmed by Mark Washbrook.
Sound by the Maniacs of Noise.
Produced by Paul Chamberlain.

© Rack-It 1988.

MONSTER MUNCH

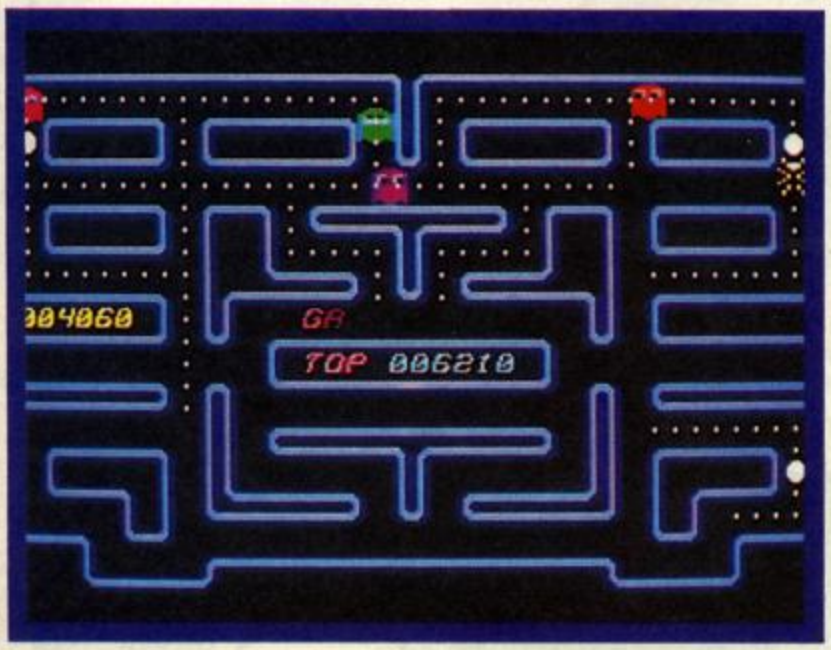
● (Atlantis)

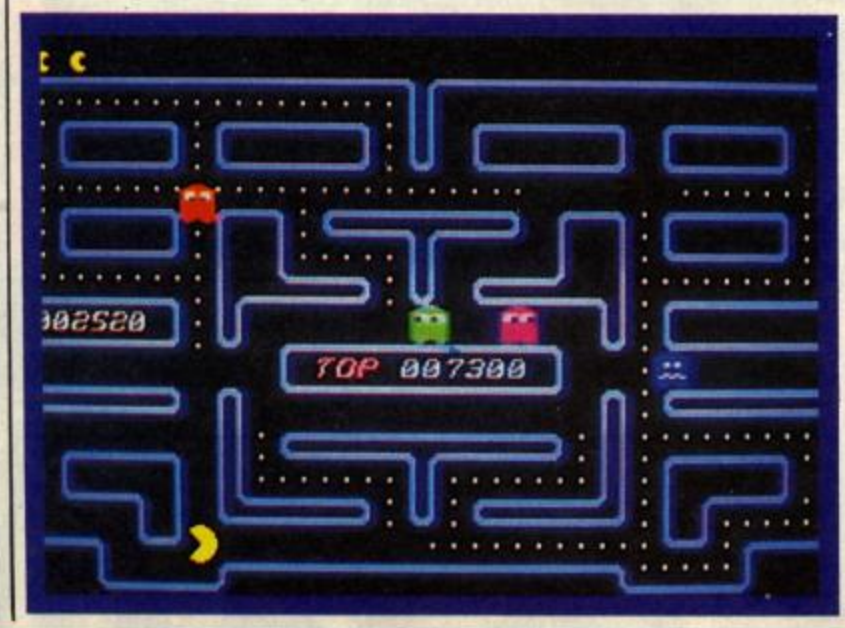
LOADING
To load, hold down **SHIFT** and press **RUN STOP**. Press **PLAY** on your cassette recorder. The program will now load automatically.

CONTROLS
Joystick in Port 2. Press FIRE button to start.

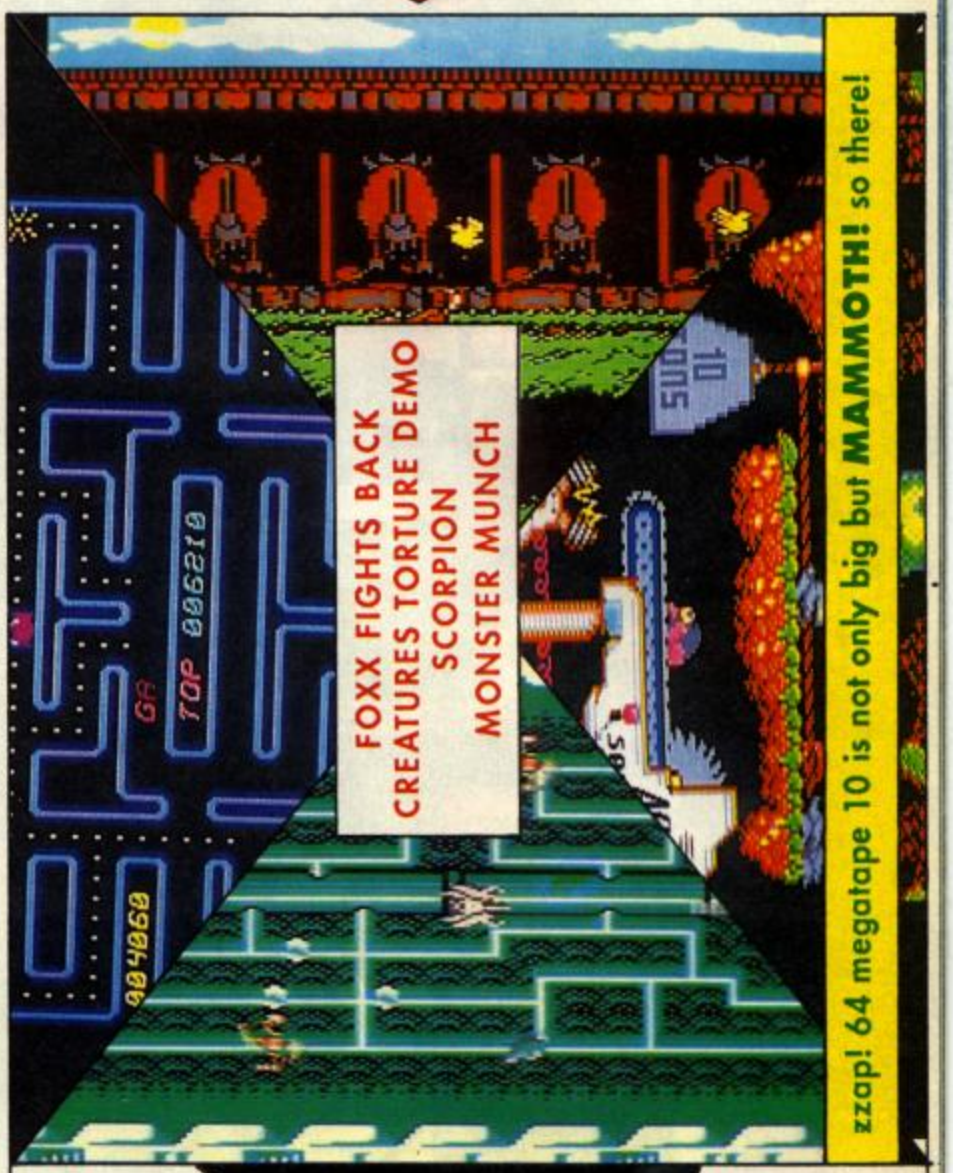
PLAY
Guide 'Munchie' around the maze and help him to eat all the white dots. Watch out for the monsters. If they catch 'Munchie', one of his three lives is lost. Turn the monsters blue by eating one of the flashing power pills. 'Munchie' can kill them now and gain lots of bonus points. When the question mark appears, eat it for a mystery bonus. When all the dots are eaten, you start a new screen which has even more dangers than the last.

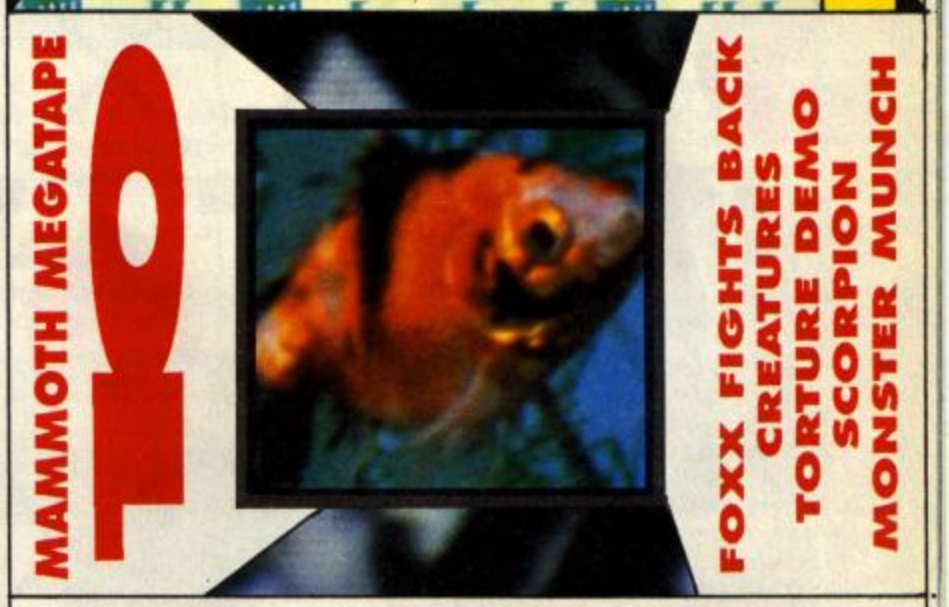
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CUT ME OUT AND FOLD ME UP, MAN!





MAMMOTH MEGATAPE 10!

MAMMOTH MEGATAPE 10
© ZZAP! 64 LTD 1990

JUST FIND AN OLD BROS TAPE AND CHUCK IT AWAY. THEN REPLACE WITH THIS TIDY COVER!

PLOT YOUR OPPONENTS DOWNFALL AND...STRIKE

PLOTTING





t all seems so easy, out can you beat the micro or your partner, at this hideously mind boggling game.
Special blocks will give you extra lives... GREAT!... but believe me, you'll need to take every advantage of this software's hardware! You'll need the skill of a Rubi-Cube master and the reflexes of a pigeon at a skeet shoot! Plot your move, take aim and block 'em out!... It's that simple... as simple as grilling ice cubes!

ADDICTION!

Addiction!...that's the name of the game. The concept is simple ...destroying blocks! But once you've got control of those bricks will you ever let go?

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the think TANK

THE COLONEL'S BEQUEST



Sierra On-Line, Amiga £39.99

'Way back in the days before ZZAP!...' (was there life before ZZAP! Grandpa?) 'Well son, not so much life as mere existence' (Oh). 'Anyway, as I was saying... around 1980 this young snip of a girl wrote a computer game called *Mystery House* and it marked the beginning of Sierra On-Line.'

The young girl was Roberta Williams who, since those dark and dusty days, has had more success than you can waggle a mouse pointer at with games such as the very popular *King's Quest* series. Now Roberta has gone back to her roots and has written another murder mystery.

A real-time tale of foul deeds and set in the 1920s, *Colonel's Bequest* is written as a stage play and consists of eight acts. In each you must witness events vital to the plot before you can advance to the next act.

You play the part of Laura Bow on a weekend visit to your friend's uncle's (Colonel Dijon) spooky ol' mansion. That same weekend the whole family is there to hear the reading of Colonel Henri Dijon's will. The family learns that all who outlive the Colonel will get a share of the old codger's wealth.

But during the weekend, murder takes place and it's up to you to discover whodunnit, why and with what. At the end of the play you refer to your notes and take a stab (get the point?) at who you think the murderer is.

The curtain opens with you in the guest room. A quick sniff around and you discover Ethel Prune (your friend's mother) who appears to be permanently squiffy.

The bathroom is not far away and Lilian (your friend) is in there carrying out her ablutions. When she leaves, you may also freshen up should you so desire, but don't take a shower unless you want you watch yourself being murdered Psycho-style.

Colonel's Bequest is one of those adventures where things happen and situations change as play progresses. People — most of whom don't appear to particularly like your snooping activities — move around and may leave clues in places where before you could find nothing. So retracing your steps and re-examining objects is a must.

Not only do you have the mansion and all its secrets to explore but also the extensive grounds. The mansion is built on a little island in the middle of the Bayou and, as the swamp is the only way out and is no place for young women, you're stuck there until you solve the murders.

It seems that everytime I review a Sierra game the problem of excessive disk access come up. I did think I might be able to write about one of their 3-D adventures without mentioning it.. but I can't. Every time you change location in *Bequest* you have to wait for the disk to access. And it takes an age. Why can't they cut the disk access down?: Delphine Software (*Future Wars* & *Stealth Project*) have done so and their location graphics, animation and so on are at least as good as Sierra's. I think people may eventually lose patience with this company's games. They could — in fact, with competition such as Delphine, I think they must — do better.

But what of the game itself? Well, there are a few annoying idiosyncrasies such as being told there's a handle sticking out of the pianola and even being able to turn it



KICK OFF 2

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★ Kit Design (Amiga, Atari ST & IBM)
★ Facility to load Player Manager teams and designed tactics.
★ Instinctive joystick controls to pass, dribble, shoot, head or chip a ball and do sliding tackles.
★ Two players teams mode against the computer.
★ After touch controls to bend or dip the ball.
★ Set piece Free Kicks, Corner Kicks, Throw Ins, Injury Time, Action Replay, red & yellow cards indeed host of features to create the atmosphere of a soccer game which is real fun to play.
★ League and Cup Competition with sudden deaths penalty shoot out.

THE ONE - *Ultimate soccer simulation.* **96%.**
THE ACE - *Brilliant. Buy, Boy, Buy.* **930.**
AMIGA FORMAT - *Best footy game to have appeared on any machine.* **94%.**
ST FORMAT - *What a game! Gem to play. Magic.* **90%.**
C & VG - *Championship winning material.* **95%.**
GAMES MACHINE - *Probably the best sports game ever.* **92%.**
COMMODORE USER - *No other footie game can touch it.* **90%.**
AMIGA ACTION - *Surpasses all other football games.* **93%.**
POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY - *Nothing short of brilliant.*
NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - *Computer football event of the year.*

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but when I tried to take the handle (to use on the fountain in the garden) I was told it wasn't here. This obviously means that I'm supposed to get a handle but not this one. The response should have been better.

However, there's plenty to see and do and it should keep budding sleuths at their computers for hours, if only while they wait for location to load. Ooooh no, don't mock!

Music and FX are good and the desire to find out what's going on in the spooky ol' mansion is very strong.

ATMOSPHERE 72%
PUZZLE FACTOR 79%
INTERACTION 82%
LASTABILITY 80%
OVERALL 79%

EAST vs WEST/ BERLIN 1948

Rainbow Arts/ Time Warp Software, Amiga £24.95

1948: the city of Berlin is split in two. Allied airlifts are the only connection West Berlin has with the rest of the world. But with the airlifts comes a crisis: a nuclear bomb has been smuggled in to this divided city where the blackmarket rules.

You, as Sam Porter, have to search Berlin for the bomb before Stalin gets his grubbies on it.

The game intro is most informative and its format is quite unusual in that the computer and an audio tape work in synchro to show a very detailed background to the plot in the style of a newsreel.

When play starts you see the streets of Berlin from above with your character, many other characters and vehicles all going about their business. Controlled entirely by mouse, you point and click to where you want to walk or on people with whom you wish to communicate.

The interaction system is fairly complex and fiddly to use. You click on a character and select the talk icon. You're then given the choice of whether to ask or tell them something and what, where and whom the conversation is to be about. Each option produces sub-options. Once you've fought your way through all this you may still find that the person you're talking to knows nothing. Enter frustration. There are far too many icons to click through and it becomes a time consuming effort to ask the right questions of the right people.

East vs West is a boring game apart from the intro and the few laughs you might get from reading the poorly translated manual. They can all blow themselves up as far as I'm concerned.



ATMOSPHERE 34%
PUZZLE FACTOR 48%
INTERACTION 21%
LASTABILITY 47%
OVERALL 35%

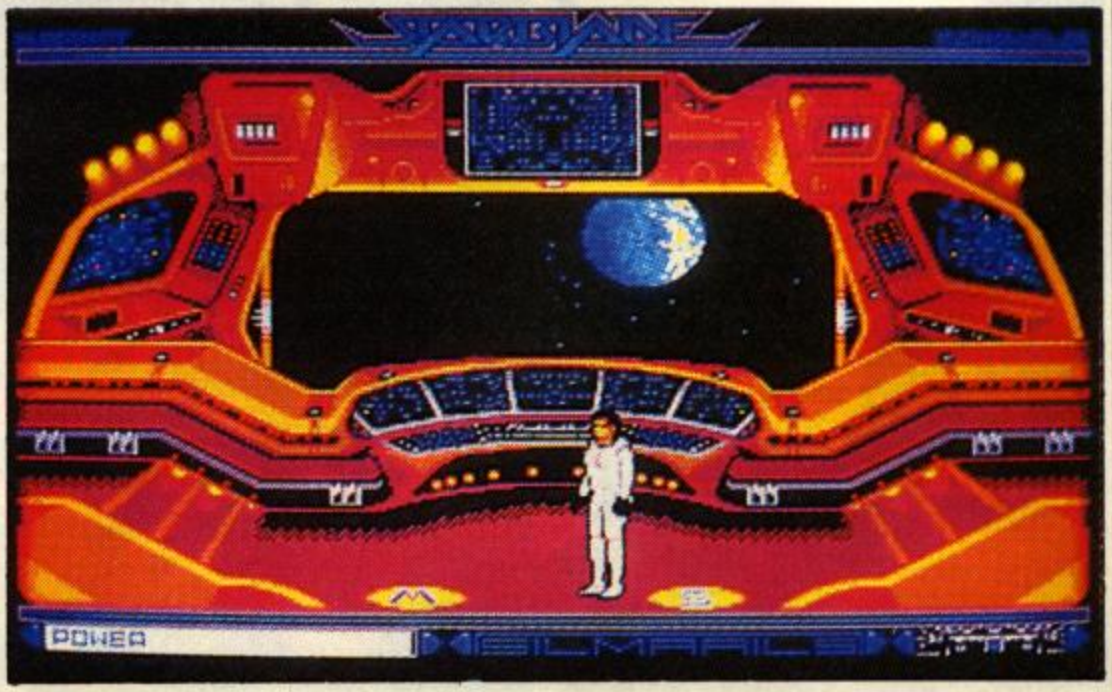
STARBLADE

Silmarils/Palace Software, Amiga £24.99

The press release that plopped through our letterbox with this game states: 'Silmarils are gradually building a name for themselves...' Take it from me lads, Silmarils is enough of a name without building anymore to it. If it gets any bigger most reviewers won't be able to say it, let alone spell it.

Anyroadup, *Starblade* is Slirmials' follow up to their all-American adventure, *Colorado* and features their now very-nearly-familiar style of graphics and large animated characters. But this time space is the setting and you're cruising the Orion Galaxy searching for Genolyn, a mutated queen insect bent on destroying all humanoid life. The coordinates of Genolyn have been scattered across several planets by the now-dead Julius Gordon. You must find the insect queen before she starts to breed.

Starblade is actually the cargo ship you, as Storm Walker, use to travel the vast void



of space. And it's a good job it is a cargo ship 'cause you'll need to buy and sell loads of stuff in a wheelin'-dealin', duckin'-divin' kind of way in an effort to keep your ship on the road and buy essential items such as weapons.

Weapons are important to you as the Investigative Bureau (ally of Genolyn) has put a massive bounty on your head and it seems everyone wants to get rich quick. On planet surfaces or travelling through space you find yourself under almost constant attack.

You have a shuttle, called the Altta, onboard Starblade in which you travel planetside to go walkabout searching for necessary spare parts for your ship or magnetic cards. These cards hold important messages, some in the form of clues as to what you should do or where you should go next.

The cockpit of Starblade features system windows for checking the condition of the ship and its current cargo, entering space-combat mode, plotting courses to other planets and loading/saving your game position. Walking around your ship is OK, if a little disorientating. Backgrounds are very detailed and feature nice little touches, flashing lights and so on, to enhance atmosphere. When in ship-to-ship combat, control is pretty sticky and graphics are not great.

Following space combat you need to check out Starblade's systems to see how unwell she is. The stores won't hold every spare part you require so you need to go planetside to build up your stocks.

Being planetside is graphically rewarding but there's not a lot to do apart from fight bounty hunters, pick up the odd object and buy or sell goods.

Starblade is enjoyable for an hour or two but quickly becomes repetitive and apart from having different planet surfaces to look at and explore you basically carry out the same tasks continually. Also, FX are below average and planetside combat is fairly basic. A bit more variation would have been nice.

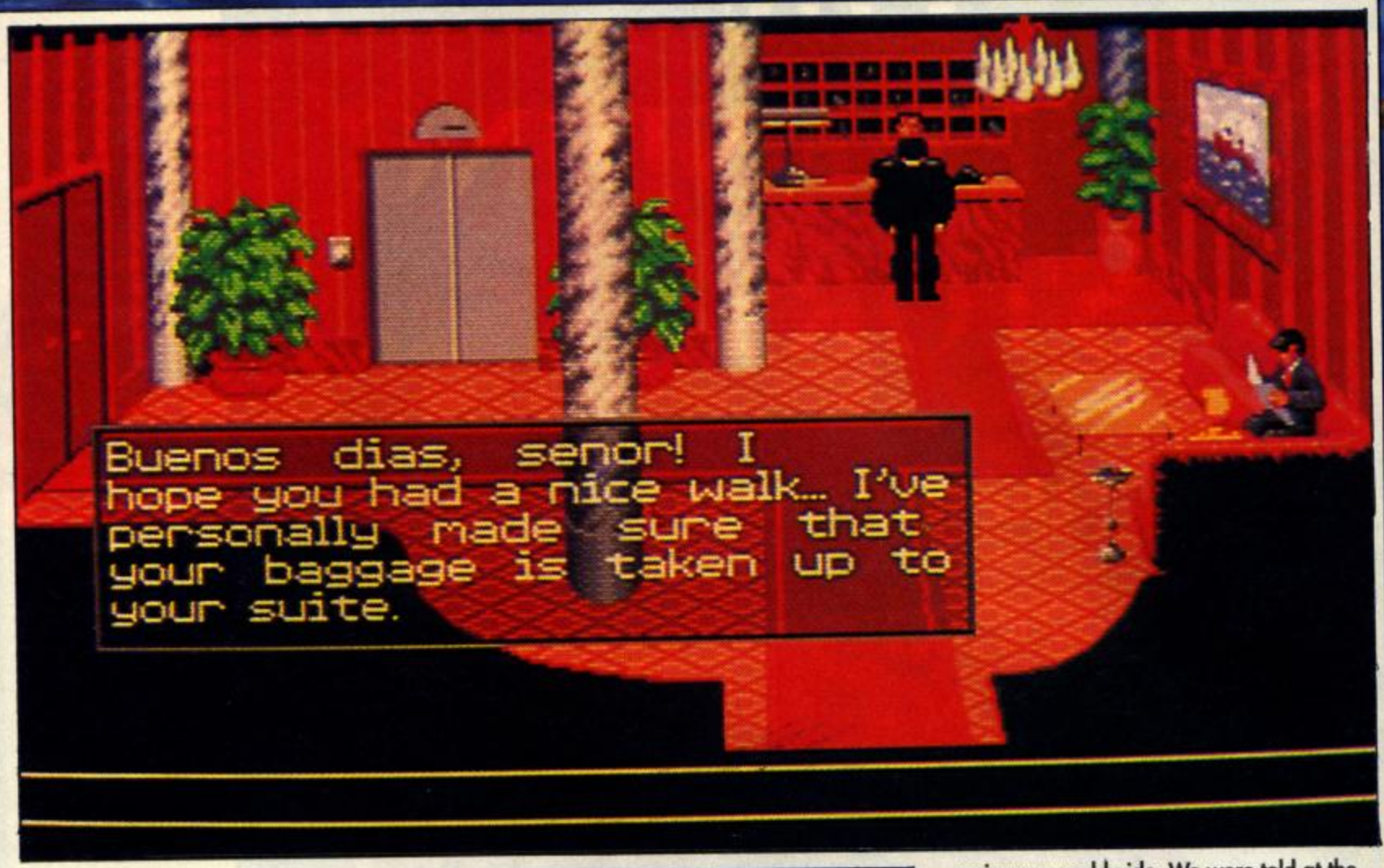
ATMOSPHERE
69%
PUZZLE FACTOR
65%
INTERACTION
64%
LASTABILITY
60%
OVERALL
63%

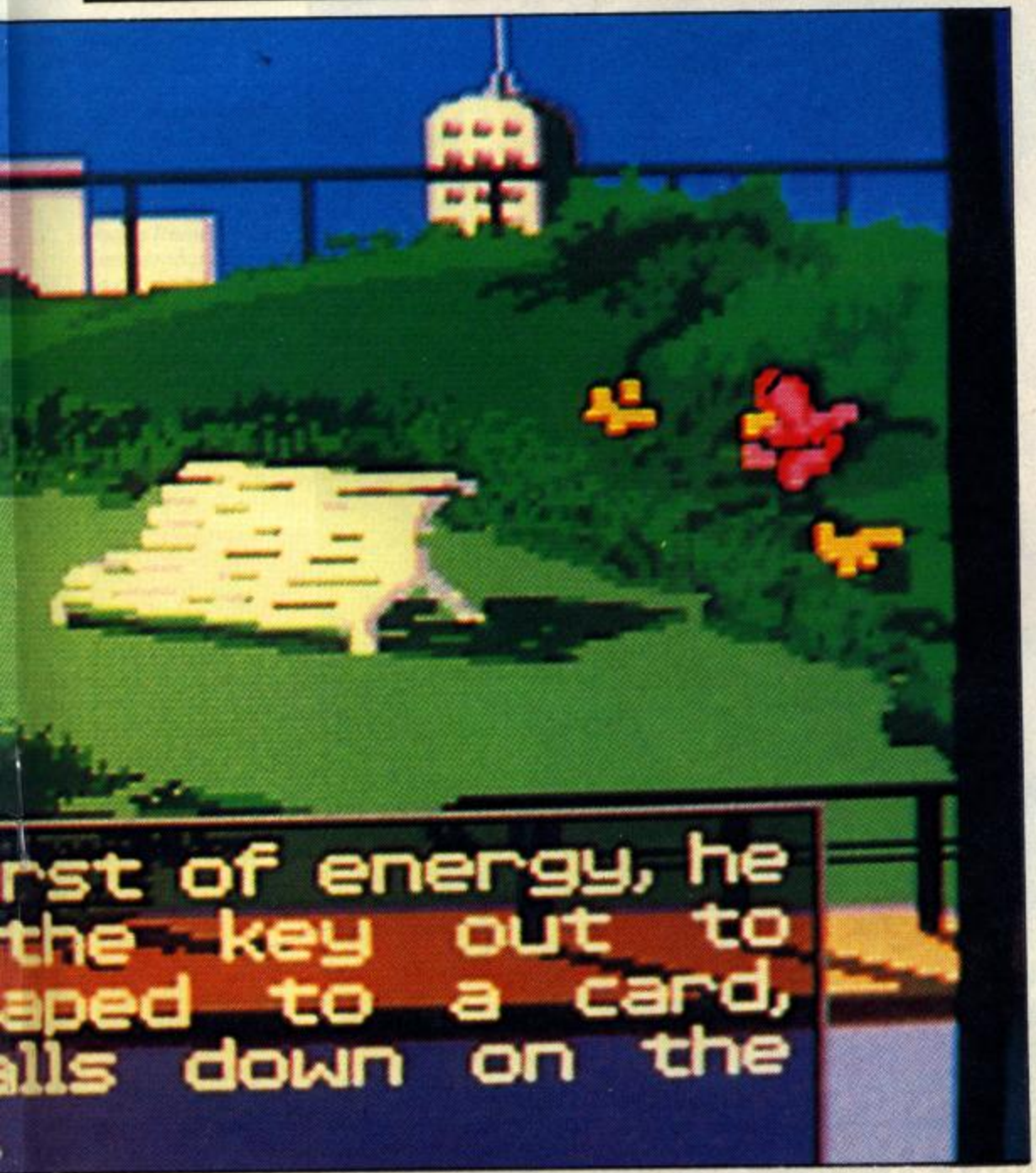
OPERATION STEALTH

Delphine/Palace Software, Amiga £24.99

Future Wars was a highly successful release for Delphine and Palace a few months back, winning awards left, right and centre and receiving acclaim from







reviewers worldwide. We were told at the time, that if we liked *Future Wars*, to 'wait 'till you get a load of the next Cinematique release'. Well, the next one is here: *Operation Stealth*.

Someone's nicked the stealth fighter. However it's not the stealth fighter we all know and love but one that has been secretly reworked and is even more powerful than the original.

You've just returned from a vacation in Lausanne and enter the office of your boss at CIA HQ in Washington DC. He informs you of the theft of the plane during its test flights in Miramar. Moscow probably isn't involved as the plane is rumoured to have landed in Santa Paragua. An agent is already there and has uncovered some most interesting information. You are required to fly out to Santa Paragua to meet with your fellow agent and help him discover the whys and wherefores of the theft of the most deadly fighter plane on earth.

The game begins with an almost-impressive, animated sequence of the theft. 'Almost impressive' as some sections are not as smooth as they might have been and the music (vaguely reminiscent of Psygnosis's *Blood Money*) is only average.

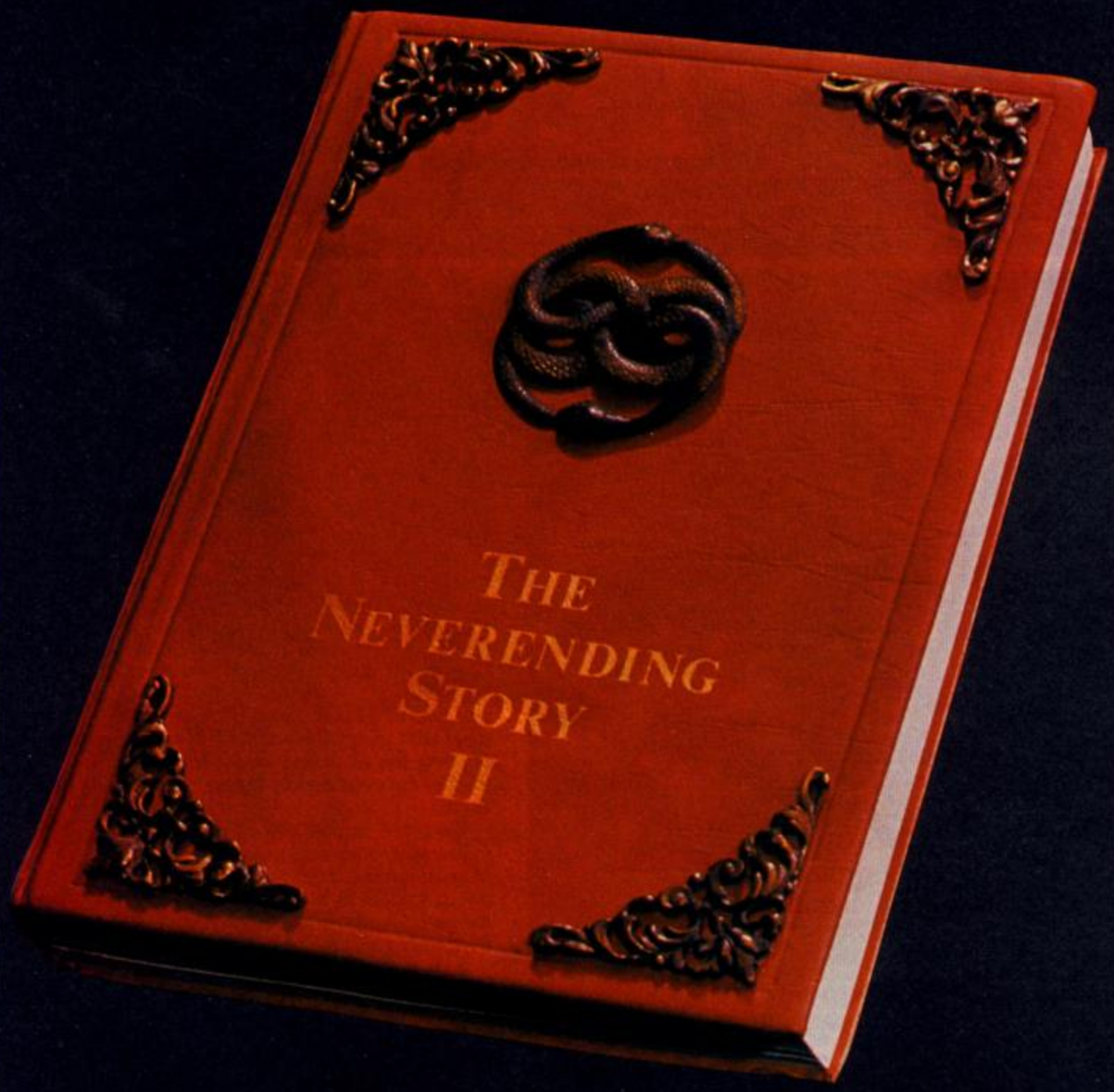
You, as secret agent John Glames, start the game at Aduana airport armed only with your plane ticket and CIA briefcase.

There's the old newspaper vendor, à la *Future Wars*, with the old coin on the return box in the first screen. Reading the paper gives a hint as to what country your unused passport should sport to prevent the security guard from arresting you for being an American. The unused passport is in the secret compartment of your case but you have to open it in a secluded, if whiffy, place. Pass the security guard and you can pick up a telegram for more clues as to what to do next.

Carry out a few more spy-type actions and you eventually get a message from

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fellow agent, Martinez, telling you to rendezvous in the park; recognition is to be by means of a red carnation. This meeting in the park is a great little sequence and I suggest you save your game just before it so you can watch it over and over again.

Graphics, Music, FX and animation all wipe the floor with Sierra On-Line's games. And apart from some crap jokes and a few naff French-Anglais translations Delphine definitely beat Sierra at their own game(s). And once you get used to 'Operating' items, such as the ground, to get things done in the game you'll find the system works really well.

You may notice how low Sierra score this month, this reflects how they compare to this superior Delphine/Cinematique game. Perhaps this brilliant bit of competition for their 3-D adventures might make them look to their laurels and get them to produce slicker games. Meanwhile, enjoy *Operation Stealth*, it's great.

ATMOSPHERE
91%
PUZZLE FACTOR
84%
INTERACTION
81%
LASTABILITY
90%
OVERALL
92%

CODE-NAME: ICEMAN

Sierra On-Line, Amiga £39.99

It is the year 2000 and the Earth's so-called superpowers are still arguing about oil and carrying out Cold War tactics with each other. Espionage is rife and a 'situation' could occur at any time.

Described as a techno thriller, *Code-name: Iceman* places you in the role of Lt Commander Johnny B Westland and begins on an island (unfortunately not Nontoonyt) in Tahiti where Westland is taking a well-earned vacation.

While sitting on the beach a quick shufty at the newspaper on the table next to you gives an inkling of what's going on in the world. Tunisia is in a powerful position due to an oil shortage. The USA and USSR are in a tug of war as they negotiate for Tunisia's oil. 'Could be a serious situation,' you think to yourself... gosh, you can see why you're a Lt Commander.

As you lounge there taking in some rays, scantily-clad, good looking girls constantly parade up and down the beach. Unfortunately, after trying to 'interact' with them, one soon realises this is NOT a *Leisure Suit Larry* game... er, so I'm told.

When bored with lying in the sun, take a look at the beach to your left and join in the game of volleyball. You get points for every ball you volley... but you're not even in control of Westland, the computer does all the work — very odd! Eventually the ball goes into the sea (guess who mis-volleyed) and the girl with whom you're playing goes in after it. She gets into trouble and you dive in to save her. You then have to go through the life-saving procedure detailed in the game manual. All very boring and the only reason for it, as far as I can tell, is as an anti-piracy device. You have to get the procedure right to get past this point in the game.

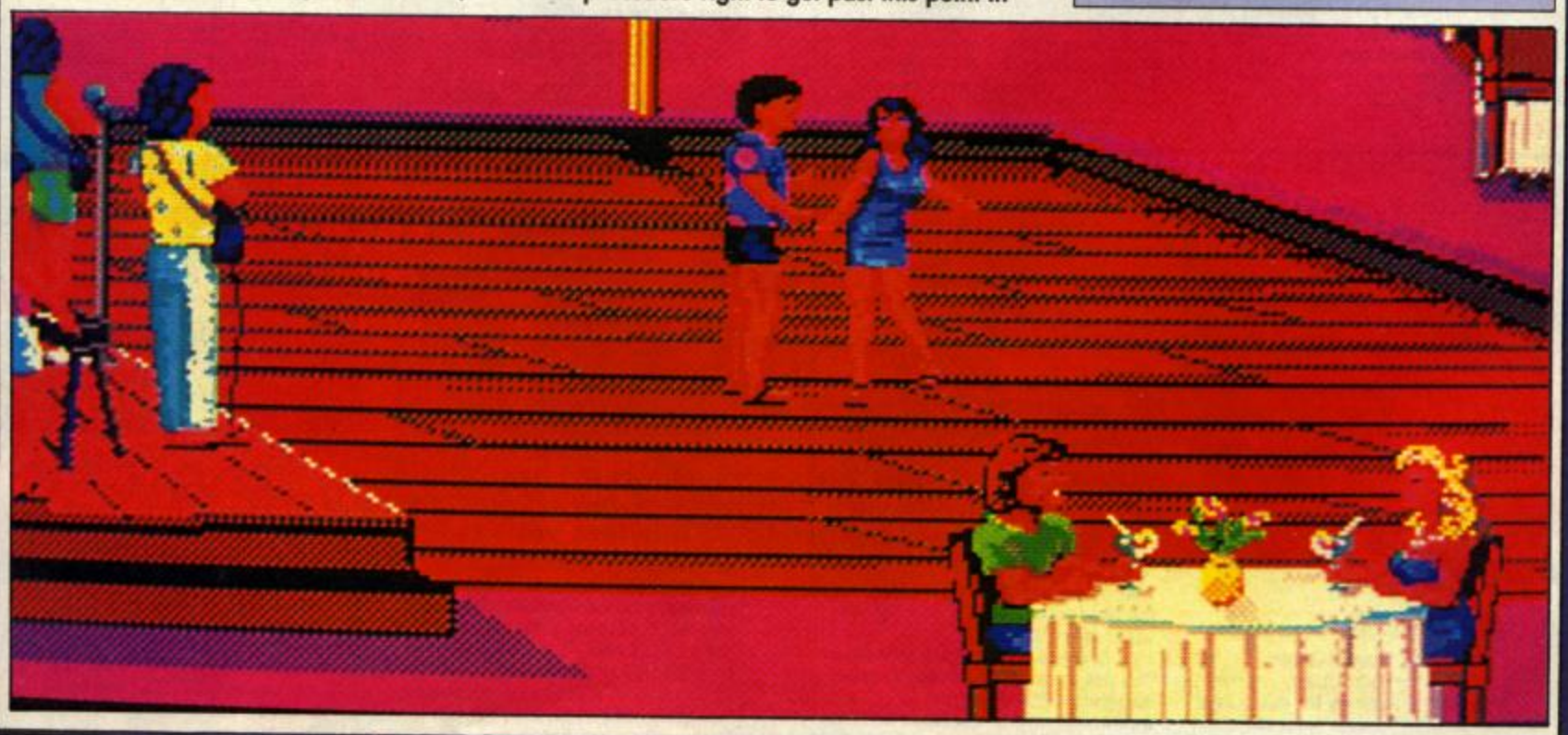
Anyway, back to the hotel and into the bar. Having a drink or two kills you! Very logical. But one woman there is quite willing to dance with you, whereupon the scene shifts to the dance floor complete with two large characterisations of you and the girl strutting your funky stuff (do people still say that?). This bit's quite funny... for a while.

The plot slowly unfolds and eventually you get to know exactly what it is you're supposed to do in the game. Piloting a nuclear sub 'using state-of-the-art simulation technology' is one the delights you have to look forward to.

Iceman features a 'new and improved playing system' whereby our hero basically does more work than in previous Sierra releases: inputting 'Look at (object)' results in Westland turning to face the object to look at it. And there's none of this 'You're not close enough' rubbish: input 'Take (object)', for example, and Westland walks over to the desired item (usually) to pick it up. This is all very nice but it really slows play down, something Sierra can hardly afford to do. This new system definitely affects game speed: just walking across the beach takes an unnecessarily long time just because the sea is animated (I use the term 'animated' very loosely). I actually became impatient with the incredibly slow pace of play and constant disk access. Usually Sierra's plots combined with their interesting gameplay make up for long waits... but not this time. A lot of the game is subaqua and also sub-standard.

The ultimate goal of *Iceman*, according to author Jim Walls, is to 'read like a newspaper'... pity it had to be the Ludlow Advertiser.

ATMOSPHERE
61%
PUZZLE FACTOR
58%
INTERACTION
67%
LASTABILITY
52%
OVERALL
60%



DATEL ELECTRONICS

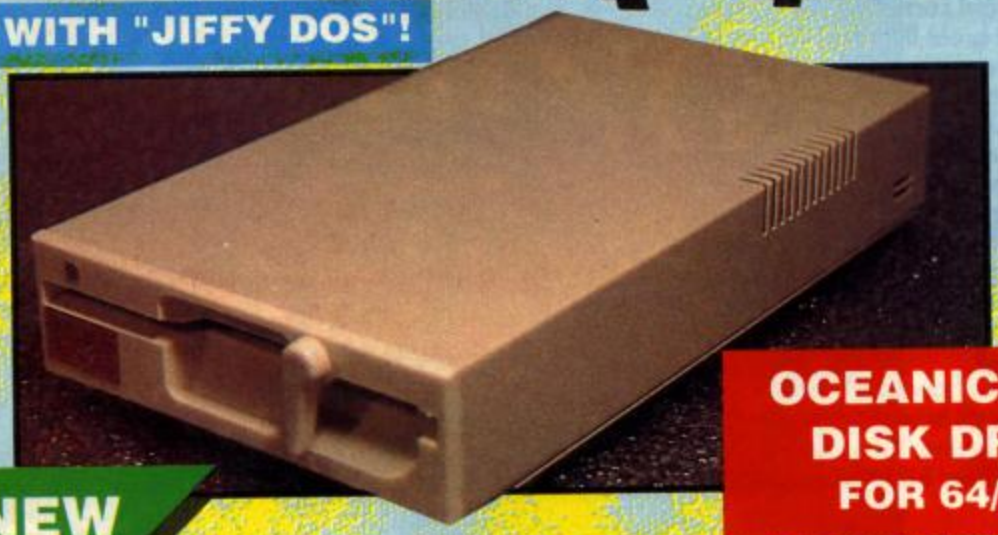


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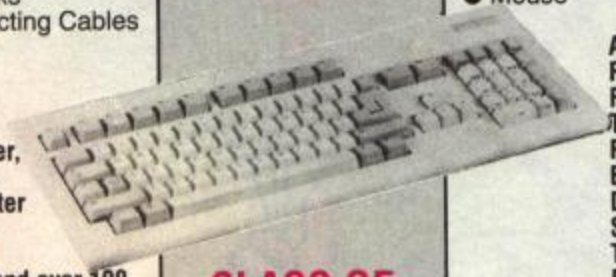
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INSIDE THE FUTURE:

THE C64GS

This month sees rumours turned into reality, with the C64GS console appearing in the plastic at the UK CES show. The machine is set to completely revolutionize the C64 market with numerous software houses developing cartridge software. STUART WYNNE explains why Commodore could have a winner.

From its launch in 1982, the basic C64 has soldiered on as the definitive 8-bit Commodore. While both the Spectrum and Amstrad CPC have enjoyed development as 128K, disk-based machines the ambitious, but expensive C128 never caught on. It was never really hyped, since soon after its launch Commodore acquired the Amiga. Yet while the 16-bit machine's success can't be doubted, its £400 price tag makes it unlikely ever to sell in the huge numbers the Speccy and C64 have. What is selling are consoles — cheap, extremely easy to use and with no piracy problems.

Step right back into the limelight the C64, the bestselling 8-bit computer in the world with a superlative specification. After years of neglect, broken only by periodic repackaging with new games, the C64 has finally returned to the spearhead of Commodore's marketing. While the standard C64 and C2N will still be sold, there's the new keyboardless model — the C64GS. Priced at just £99.99 the console will be packaged with a joystick and a cartridge containing *International Soccer*, *Klax*, *Flimbo's Quest* and *Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O'Fun*.

PHYSICAL: Six months after we first reported the console rumours, the C64GS turns out to be a rather unremarkable-looking piece of hardware: a cream lozenge distinguished only by ventilation slits at the rear and a black strip across the cartridge slot including a day-glo 'C64 Games System' logo.

Apart from the cartridge slot being on top, the arrangement of ports is very familiar. Just as on the C64, at the rear of the machine there's a composite video output for monitors and a standard RF output for TVs. On the right side there's the two joystick ports, power input and on/off switch. There obviously aren't any datasette or disk drive ports, but apart from some minor ROM changes the circuitboard inside is the familiar C64 set-up.

The supplied cartridge has a four megabit (512K) memory — the same as an Amiga. The size of future cartridges will vary according to the needs of the game. Ocean expect to be able to compress most of their 180k multiloads onto one megabit carts (128k).

All the cartridges will be compatible with existing C64s and C128s (both of which have cartridge ports). Whether those ancient cartridges first released for the C64 will be compatible with the console is less likely, as many required key input.

PERFORMANCE

The console has identical graphic and sonic capabilities to the C64: the same super-smooth scrolling, blended colours and impressive sprite-handling abilites accompanied by one of the most sophisticated sound chips around. The custom video and sound chips, VIC II and SID respectively, make possible some very impressive games. Just look at *Turrican*! Multiload games such as *Turbo Out Run*, *The Untouchables* and so on will be much more user-friendly on cartridge. Programmers can also duplicate memory intensive coin-op intro sequences without irksome loading delays, but the potential of cartridges is much more than that!

The ability to rapidly snatch data from cartridge breaks memory restrictions. On the C64 conversion of *Golden Axe* a creature had to be cut because it meant loading in too much data for a single load. On cartridge the graphics can be incredibly detailed and levels vast, with fresh data being loaded in all the time. Already several software houses are developing cartridge-only games.

GAMEPLAY GENIUS

According to Commodore 'it has commitment from major software houses to release up to 100 new cartridges before Christmas'. Of course, the key phrase is 'up to' but there's undoubtedly plenty of interest. The anti-piracy potential is as exciting to software houses as the capacity for expanded games. Another factor is the likely price tag — £24.95. Although this may vary with software houses, cartridge production costs and the maths of distribution, mean £25 is likely to be the average. Obviously if software houses want to sell to C64/128 owners as well as console owners, the cartridge games must use the expanded performance capabilities. For console owners the price is below average compared to Nintendo and Sega products, and Commodore will allow anyone to write for the GS — for a small royalty — which should encourage development.

In any case, **Ocean**'s participation is obviously critical to the success of almost any new games system in the UK. They're not only the biggest and most successful software house in Britain, but also very closely associated with Commodore via various gamespacks for both Amiga and C64. They're already planning four releases: *Batman:*



★ *The Last Ninja I & II* may appear on cartridge, rewritten as the *Ninja Remix*.

The Movie, *Operation Thunderbolt* and *Shadow Of The Beast*. The latter has yet to be released on tape or disk, but is a very nice looking conversion of the Amiga graphical showcase.

Ocean's Software Development Manager **Gary Bracey** was very enthusiastic about the console which he obviously expects to succeed. It seems likely games will, or already are being developed for cartridge only. Games for tape or disk may be expanded, some digitized movie stills could be used for presentation. The excellent interlevel screens on the disk version of *Untouchables* are an example of what could be done. Both *SCI* and *RoboCop II* seem likely to be released on cartridge.

Also heavily involved is **Mindscape**, the American company which specialises in disk-intensive and very complex games, ranging from the huge Origin RPGs to the Gold Medal-winning *Space Rogue* to the slapstick-packed *Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O' Fun*. Mindscape are particularly excited by the potential to put many previously disk-only products on cartridge. After all with the majority of UK C64 owners only having a datasette, the market for their games will be dramatically increased. Their games are also sophisticated enough to justify the high price tag, particularly with plenty of high quality packaging. They were involved in developing the cart which comes with the console, and already have a game under development for cartridge only.

System 3 haven't gone that far yet, but following on from *Flimbo's Quest* they foresee making all future games available on cartridge. They also foresee doing compilations and possibly even going cartridge only! **Sales Curve** are no less enthusiastic, and consider it 'very, very likely we'll be releasing new stuff on cartridge'. Again cartridge-only games are being considered. **Palace** see plenty of life left in the C64 all round and are currently discussing whether to put *International 3D Tennis* on cartridge. *Barbarian III*, due sometime in 1991, is also a possibility. **Hewson** have yet to make a firm decision, although the prospects of releasing their glittering back catalogue on cartridge compilations is certainly under consideration. **Thalamus** are considering putting their 'greatest hits' compilation on cartridge.

One software house which would appear a natural for cartridge releases is **MicroProse**, which has a large range of first class disk-intensive C64 classics. Unfortunately they're currently concentrating on developing their coin-op system and are adopting a wait-and-see attitude to the cartridge market. **Mirrorsoft** are 'always very interested in new developments' and will be following the progress of the console.

While the '100 cartridges before Xmas' prediction seems optimistic, software support is clearly strong with many software houses developing cartridges and everyone very interested.

PROSPECTS

The GS is being launched into a crowded market. At approximately the same price tag there's the Nintendo Entertainment System and Sega Master System, both £80 in their most basic form. The C64 can beat most NES games for both graphics and particularly sound. However, Nintendo is producing expanded cartridges such as *Track & Field* which approach 16-bit quality for £30-£40. Superior marketing has made the Sega Master System the most popular UK console so far, although most games are graphically and sonically inferior to the NES's. The Sega does have some 16-bit like static screens, but is already being overshadowed by the UK launch of Sega's 16-bit Megadrive console. *Golden Axe* on Megadrive beats the coin-op! — for a price. The Megadrive is £189.99, and the few games available start at £30. Probably even more impressive is Nintendo's Super Famicom, which is due to be launched in Japan soon but is unlikely to reach the UK for years.

Another new console is the CPC-based Amstrad GX4000. Like the GS it's being launched at the UK CES for £99. It comes with two Japanese-style control pads and a free cartridge of *Burning Rubber* — written by Ocean in the mould of *WEC Le Mans*. Speed and graphics are up to 16-bit standards, but by comparison sound is mediocre and the CPU is still the old Z80. Ocean are supporting the GX4000 with conversions, but whether it will earn a massive software base is still open to question.

Nevertheless the competition is such that already trade newspaper CTW have reported Commodore may reduce the price, although Commodore's **Andrew Ball** dismissed this as 'pure speculation, we have no intention of getting into any price wars.' Commodore plan a big ad campaign to push the machine before Xmas.

What is certain is that the GS will revitalise the entire C64/128 market. Cartridges offer considerable benefits in both anti-piracy and performance. Software houses which might otherwise have stopped writing for the C64 are now thinking of developing games especially written for the cartridge. While in the past C64 cartridges were overtaken by cheaper tape and disk, nowadays most games require so much multiloading cartridges have a big advantage. Also programmers know enough to make cartridge-only games very special indeed. **Mark (*Turbo Out Run*) Kelly** has already floated the concept of a racing game construction kit based on the *Turbo* code!

For the future, Ocean's Gary Bracey foresees the market splitting into two camps — CD-ROM-based 16-bit computers for the older end of the market, and cartridge-based consoles at the younger. Cumbersome and sluggish tape would become obsolete, except possibly for budget, as might disks. This will mean more expensive games, but hopefully through discounts in magazines like ZZAP! the effective price might be nearer £20. This isn't too much more than disk and the potential is certainly there for awesome games. Of course for the moment owners of C64 and C128 computers have the best of both worlds: cartridge, disk and tape. So get ready for exciting times ahead!

★ The heavily multiload *Fiendish Freddy* features numerous interlevel pictures and is perfect for cartridge.



★ *Batman: The Movie* could well be one of the first Ocean back-catalogue games to be put on cartridge. *RoboCop* will surely follow.



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✂ - - -



AXE ATTACK!

● Win a great Midi hifi from Virgin!!

BERT HENDRIX: Hit me with that guitar, Billy.

BILL CLAPTOUT: Okay Bert...

(CLONK!!!)

BERT HENDRIX: Ouch, my bruised bonce!

Yeah man, there's nothing like a great axe solo. Virgin should know: their latest coin-op conversion is that stunning Sega hack-'em-up, *Golden Axe*. As revealed in last issue's preview feature, Probe Software are doing the conversions with C64 Programmers Of The Year, Mark Kelly and Steve Crow working on the 64 game. With a brilliant coin-op and such pedigree chums... er, programmers, *Golden Axe* is set to attack your 64 or Amiga in October.

Meanwhile, you can into a suitably violent frame of mind listening to heavy metal on a rockin' Ferguson Midi Hifi, first prize in this kerrazy comp. **Read.** This piece of aural hardware's got the lot: twin tape decks with high-speed and synchro dubbing, a three-band radio tuner and that all-important turntable for your Judas Priest albums — just the thing to cheer you up. **ZZAP!** And for the runners-up there's 25 copies of the C64 (tape or disk) or Amiga game — so don't forget to state which format you'd like.

And you won't even have to bang your head to enter. **Every**. Just answer the three easy questions...

1. **In which town is Probe based?**
2. **What are Mark Kelly's two favourite TV soap operas?**
3. **On which machine does Steve Crow develop his outstanding graphics?**

Got 'em? Then scribble them (along with which game format you'd like) on the back of a postcard and send it to *Newsfield, Mad Axe Comp, Stalag ZZAP!, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW* to reach us no later than October 28.

(Usual competition rules apply and this comp is guaranteed free of subliminal messages. **Month**!)

CARNAGE!

Total Recall is the sort of spectacular gore-fest kids are meant not to see, but that didn't stop Paul Verhoeven's RoboCop Movie becoming the bestselling game of all time and his latest film is just as good. Active Minds are the independent programming house aiming to give you 'the ride of a lifetime' and STUART WYNNE paid them a visit.

Total Recall is set in 2084, when a continual war rages between two power blocs and Mars has been colonized by the brutal Cohaagen. Quaid (Arnold Schwarzenegger) is a hen-pecked construction worker who longs to emigrate to Mars, despite the daily terrorist explosions. Then one day he hears of Rekall, the company which implants false memories so people have the illusion of having visited distant planets. Quaid asks for a Mars memory, but rather than a tourist trip he wants a secret agent fantasy to be implanted. One where there's lots of violence, beautiful women to meet and an entire planet to save...

However the memory implant fails because Quaid actually *was* a secret agent who's had his memories wiped. Upon leaving Rekall Quaid comes under attack from Cohaagen's men who fear he's regaining his memory. From then on it's one big rollercoaster chase packed with violence, gore and imaginative plot twists.

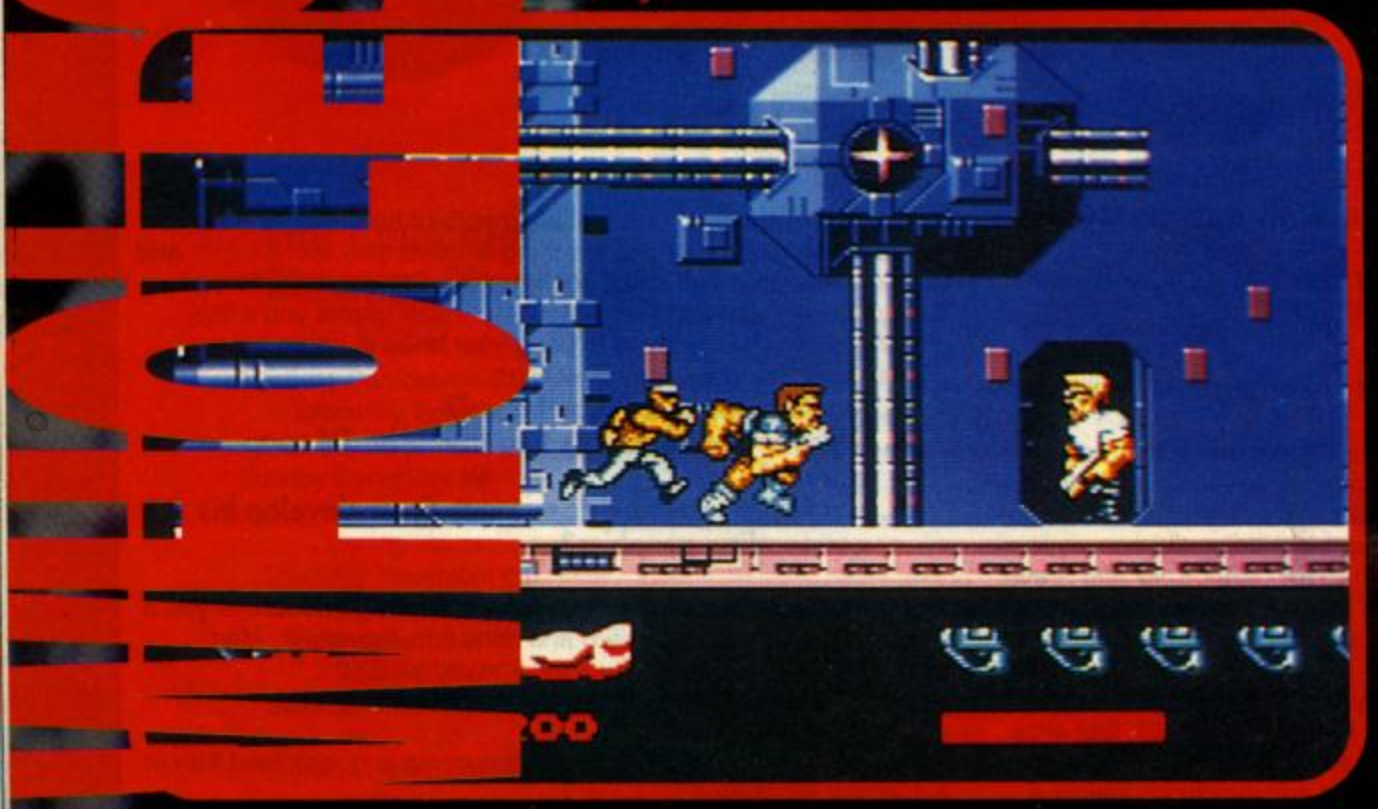
Dave Colley, the joint head of Active Minds with Alison Kelly, clearly thinks the licence is terrific. 'Ocean and Schwarzenegger are huge names, we couldn't have asked for something better to start with.' They could've asked for more time though: while their OCP-like, marble-finished offices are impressive, moving in was hectic. 'We started work at the end of April, or May I think it was. It was very frantic to begin with. We'd just moved into the new offices and were buying all our new equipment. We had problems with the PDS system as well.'

Active Minds is Dave and Alison's second company — Video Images being the first, currently dormant after some initial work on *Bangkok Knights*. 'I didn't have enough people, so with Active I wanted to get all the best people I could possibly muster. Lots of people with lots of ideas.' These include Amiga programmer Fred O'Rourke (16-bit *Laser Squad*), graphic artist Simon Butler (*RoboCop*) and C64 programmer Mike Lyons (US *War In Middle Earth*).

For *Total Recall*, 'We came up with a spec which Ocean liked the look of. There have been one or two changes as we've gone along, but mainly we've been left alone. It's really great to have that sort of freedom.'



The first level: Quaid (Arnie) runs into trouble in the form of Helm. (Amiga)



THE GAME

While Dave hadn't read the original Philip K. Dick short story, *We Can Remember It For You Wholesale*, he had a lot of material from the film. 'We had a copy of the script from the start so we knew where we were going. Then we went to a special showing in London to check the backgrounds, though they weren't all that imaginative anyway!'

According to Simon Butler, 'It's nigh on impossible to really do a film licence unless it's on CD ROM. So you have to get the essence of the thing. The main element in *Total Recall* is that it's a chase. We took that theme and developed it as much as possible.'

There are five sections altogether, the first taking place after Quaid has left the Rekall offices and is being pursued by the baddies. He has to find a number of special objects that he needs to escape. The section is viewed side-on, *RoboCop*-style with Quaid sprinting around, beating up the baddies. He can also pick up weapons to use on them. On the C64 Quaid will have over 80 frames of animation.

According to Dave there's 'an enormous map which would take you ten minutes to cross from one side to the other... well, that might be an exaggeration. But it is very big.' There are also four types of baddies: Homers, Patrol, Static (until they see you) and Grunts which come out and try and beat you up.

Stage two is a car chase, viewed from overhead in *Spyhunter*-style. Quaid has taken control of a Johnnycab and must lose his enemies in traffic. This ends in a warehouse where Quaid is briefed by his previous, secret agent self on who he is. More answers lie on Mars: level three is a small side-on action game, recreating Quaid's dramatic arrival on the Red Planet.

But Quaid's investigations on Mars soon get him into trouble with Cohaagen again and another car chase results. Only now Quaid is armed and



Having picked up the gun and briefcase Quaid pauses to admire a passing

the race through the underground tunnels has plenty of violence including some tunnel-digging machines with dozens of spinning drill bits to avoid.

The final level is another side-on view, platforms and ladders arcade maze. After plenty of gunplay, leaping from platform to platform and extensive exploring, Quaid will finally take on Cohaagen and maybe save a planet. Active Minds are promising an 'interesting' conclusion to the game which they hope to keep secret.

Originally there was talk of the game being squeezed into a single load on C64, but now it seems more likely to be a multiload like the Amiga. Between each level will be scenes from the movie, probably in comic strip form. The music is being provided by Dave Whittaker, who'll be composing his own theme rather than using Jerry Goldsmith's movie score.

In any case, *Total Recall* still requires plenty of work — there are new people coming onto the project any day now — but an October release date is planned so hopefully we'll have a review next month. Dave Colley is determined it'll play well and to exhaustively playtest it. 'We'll make time, even if it means a lot of late nights. I'm in charge of that so I'll make sure it's done. The first level won't be incredibly difficult. I want it to be so you can play it as soon as you pick the joystick up.'

PAINT IT RED

Programming *Total Recall* has been 'a bit of a pain, but enjoyable overall' for Liverpudlian Mike Lyons. The C64 programmer used to work with Mike Singleton's Maelstrom Games, helping out with the dramatically different US version of *War In Middle Earth*. After that he did some work on *Survivor*, a project which was shelved so everyone could concentrate on finishing *Midwinter*. Mike did some programming on the PC *Midwinter* conversion prior to briefly turning freelance before Dave talked him into his new programming house. While strategy games are his favourite, like many programmers he doesn't play games that much not even having a computer at home. In the office *RoboCop* is thrown on when he's bored.

One of three people who came over from Ocean to form Active's art department, Simon Butler is working closely with Mike over the graphics. However, 'I came in six weeks into the project and had to catch up pretty damn quick.' Like most graphic artists he uses an ST to develop on.

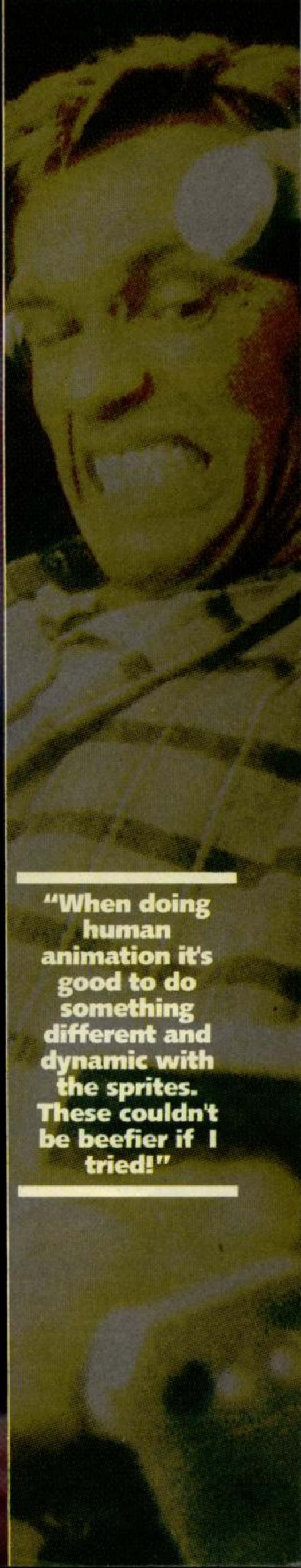
I asked if programmers told him how many frames of animation to do. 'They try to. But graphic artists have more input nowadays, saying what they think. I always go for the maximum, see if they can do it. There's lots of coin-op conversions, so it's exciting to have a chance to do original stuff like *Total Recall*. When doing human animation it's good to do something different and dynamic with the sprites. These couldn't be beefier if I tried!'

The Amiga sprites have already been through a dramatic change. Early preview shots showed a fairly realistic style; the new style is much more exaggerated.

'There's very few new people coming into graphics. So it's all the same people, bored with trotting out the same old thing over and over again. We want to do new stuff. Programmers feel the same, I suppose. I remember working on *The Vindicator* and David Ward called me in to ask me about it. There were these things in it with their insides falling out. They weren't human, so it was alright. I want something with oomph, something worth talking about..'

What's that on the wall? A Total Recall poster!





"When doing human animation it's good to do something different and dynamic with the sprites. These couldn't be beefier if I tried!"



RAZE, THE SIZZLING NEW MONTHLY DELIVERING SCORCHING CONSOLE AND 16-BIT COMPUTER ENTENTAINMENT, AT YOUR NEWSAGENT FROM 27TH SEPTEMBER FOR ONLY £1.95, OR SEND YOUR CHEQUE TO RAZE, NEWSFIELD, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1JW. BRACE YOURSELF FOR THIS NEW EXPLOSIVE PACKAGE...

RAZE *(reiz)*
vb. (tr) 1. To demolish (a town, buildings, etc) completely, level (especially in the phrase raze to the ground). 2. To delete, erase. 3. To destroy, wipeout (as in raze the oppisition).

Hell Razen'

PIG IN A POKE!



THE TIPPING CONTINES....

Without further ado, welcome to that bit of the magazine dedicated to cheating, POKE-ing and generally avoiding death in your favourite game. Pig in a Poke returns once more with tips on the brain-bending *Damocles*, the further adventures of *Turrican*, the low-down on Domark's *Castle Master*, Palace's *International 3D Tennis*, *Snare* and much, much more — there's even a *Kendo Warrior* map and solution there to keep our fish friends happy. S Yarde from Worthing sent in (too late) a beautiful map of *Fantasy Island Dizzy*, if only it had arrived last month!! I've said it in the *Turrican* tips once but I'll say it here as well — no more *Turrican* tips please! Now all I'll say is LET THE TIPS COMMENCE!!!

Push joystick in direction of arrow and press fire

Your shot or serve

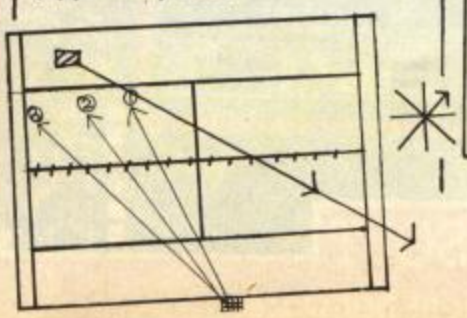
You

Computers shot or serve

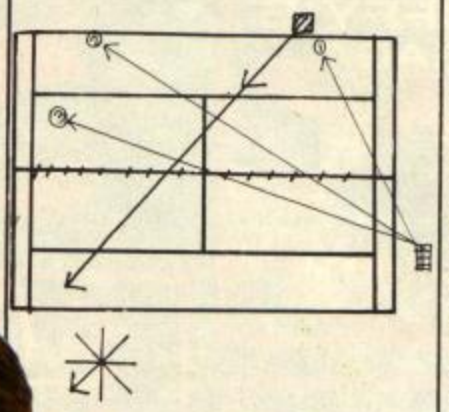
Computer

INTERNATIONAL 3D TENNIS
(Palace)

Tips for playing against the Ivan Lendl of the computer gaming world. (Thanks have to go to a Mr Anonymous as once again Robin's gone and lost the letter with the tips. Thanks to whoever out there).
There are usually three options on the computer's serve but it is usually Number 2. The computer automatically puts you in line with the ball so just do this simple move. If you are on the other side then do a northwest (upper left) shot.

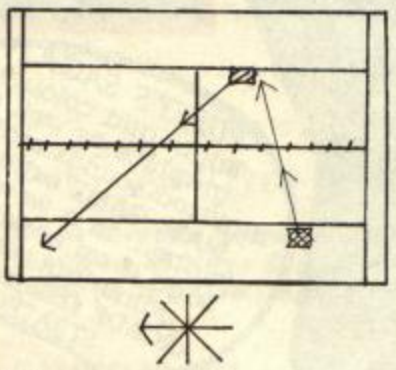


The next diagram is of the computer returning the shot. If you are on the opposite side then these controls are reversed.

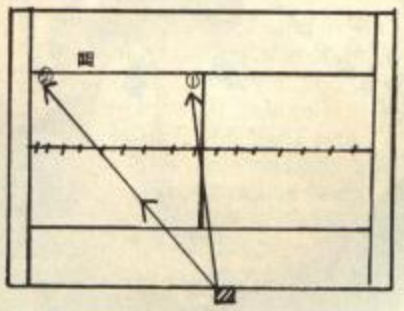


Again there are usually three options and Number 1 is most common. This is the only shot which will definitely go over the net. With this move the computer has no chance.

If you are on the other side then put the joystick in the south-east (lower right) shot position.

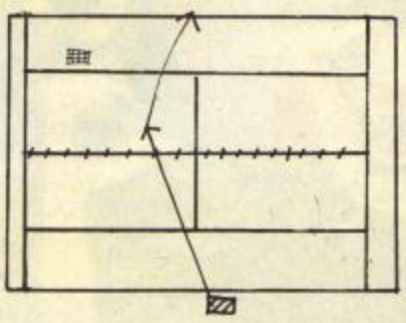


If during a rally the computer is at one side put it to the other.



When serving, it is best to keep the fire button pressed until the ball is just about to drop, then let go and put the joystick into the direction you want the ball to go. Be careful not to over- or under-hit the ball.

There is also another good serve



This is quite tricky so it needs lots of practice. Put the joystick into position 1 and when the ball is about to drop let go of the fire button, put the joystick into position 2 and press fire until the ball is hit.

KEY FACTORS

1. If the serving from the computer is too fast then just press fire as soon as your man flashes, otherwise you, could muck up the shot by over- or under-hitting the ball.
2. Try and get the computer to move over one side and you hitting to the other.
3. Unless you are at the baseline (the back line) then you cannot hit the long shots to the far end of the court, as you will over-hit it.
4. When starting up it is best to play one-set matches.
5. Also when starting up it is best to use semi-pro as this gets you used to the supa-serve option.

CAMERA ANGLES

The best camera angles to use during the game are 2 and 8. The rest are only good for spectators or watching your serve.

DAMOCLES
(Novagen)

Well, the wait for the game was long enough and the same goes for the tips. You can't have ALL been so absorbed with exploring the *Damocles* solar system that you forgot to send in tips can you?!? Anyway, the tips are slowly beginning to appear and here's the first and (easiest) way to 'complete' the game along with a list of where the teleports go and other useful objects littered around the *Damocles* world. Now has anyone figured out any other ways of completing the game, (word is coming in of a solution involving the Book of Wishes and a heavily rumoured solution based around time travel (!): more will be revealed soon).

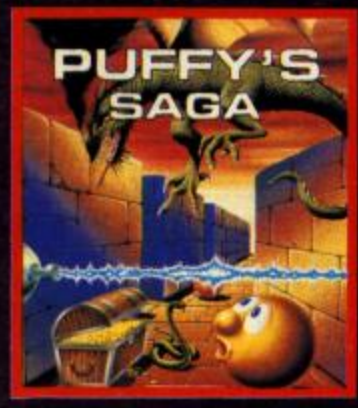
SOLUTION NUMBER ONE

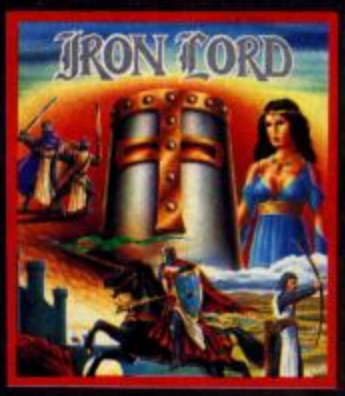
An easy enough way to complete the game: just blow up Damocles. Unsubtle but it works.

As soon as you land pick up the V.I.P. LIMO KEY from the spaceport building and drive the LIMO down to the State Office. There it's best to pick up the DAMOCLES FILE, read it and then attend the briefing by the State President in her office. When it

TAKE 5











SKATEWARS

A fast, violent and addictive SPORTS SIMULATION which will test your joystick and your nerves to the limit. The only way to win : aggressive tactics and strategic moves !



- ST
- C64 D + K7
- CPC D + K7
- SP D + K7

IRON LORD

Set in a massive and colourful medieval world, there's STRATEGY, ADVENTURE, ARCADE and much, much more here. This work of art will surely keep you occupied for weeks on end.



- AG
- ST
- C64 D (K7 to come)
- CPC D
- SP D + K7
- PC to come

PUFFY'S SAGA

Bright and colourful graphics as well as digitized sounds make this MAZE GAME extremely polished. In a word Puffy's Saga is an entertaining game that requires ARCADE skill as well as STRATEGY.



- AG
- ST
- CPC D + K7
- SP D + K7
- C64 D (K7 to come)

NIGHT HUNTER

In this addictive horror-fantasy epic, you're Dracula, the blood-sucking Count. No doubt you'll get excited by this classy game whose sound, graphics and playability are equally impressive.

- AG
- ST
- CPC D
- SP D + K7
- PC to come





TWINWORLD

Twinworld is a great combination of PLATFORM and ARCADE AVENTURE action. You'll get lots of fun wandering through the beautiful graphics of its 23 levels.



- AG
- ST
- C64 D (K7 to come)
- SP D + K7
- CPC D + K7
- PC to come

UBI SOFT
Entertainment Software

PIG IN A POKE!



comes to accepting the mission you can hold out and force the President to eventually offer you up to 25 million credits, any higher though and she'll show you the door.

Take the EAGLE 9SE KEY and go to the Moorby School of Flying and take the aircraft up, up and away. From here it's best to first get the A-Z COMPUTER from the Post Sorting Office (location 12-14) in SNOW ISLAND on ERIS. This handy device allows you to identify buildings and places and is vital to your mission's success. It's also a good idea to nip over to location 09-02 and go down to the basement and pick up the ANTI-GRAV (which allows you to pick up very heavy devices — including vehicles).

Saving your position constantly? Good! If not then get into the habit of doing so right away! It's no fun having to reload the entire game again just because you forgot to Save your position before entering delightful places such as the Timewarp Prison!

There are two relatively similar ways to destroy Damocles but here we'll just discuss the quicker involving four NOVA TRIGGERS and the lethal NOVA BOMB — the locations of each are listed below. For Nova Trigger 1 (the SIDEBOARD) you need Key B to be able to get into Professor Hantzen's New House in UR CITY on GAEA. Key B can be found on BEAR ISLAND on ERIS so this isn't too difficult a task (see the list of Key locations below). Nova Trigger 2 (the CUPBOARD) is in the Post Sorting Office along with the A-Z COMPUTER so this isn't too difficult to collect either. The third Nova Trigger (the HI-FI) is a little trickier to obtain as you need 40,000 credits to purchase it with from the Mega Trading post at CHALDEA METROPOLIS on GAEA (and they don't tolerate shoplifters).

To get this you need to trade something and unless you've done some exploring you've had it. It's fortunate for you then, dear reader, that Uncle Robin can help you out here.

First head off to any Trading Post in the CAPITAL CITY on ERIS (the one at 15-15 will do) and trade in your V.I.P. LIMO KEY for 12,000 credits. Now head off to the Trading Post at location 08-14 in the CAPITAL CITY where lo and behold there's a 'near brand new, one previous owner, low mileage, good bodywork, runs like a dream' BESTCUPAND SAUCER (!). What's better is that the keys are in the Trading Post and best of all, you've now got the cash to buy them with!! The BESTCUPAND SAUCER KEYS are a mere 9,600 credits so buy the keys and drop the EAGLE 9SE keys (for which you'll receive a whopping 49,000 credits). Now walk out, say bye bye to the EAGLE 9SE and get in the SAUCER and head for the Trading Post in the CHALDEA METROPOLIS where you can now buy the Nova Trigger 3 (the location is shown below). Hurrah! Now there's only one more Nova Trigger to go and that's on the planet METIS orbiting ERIS. Go to the Nixon International Court and walk straight in. Walk right up to the table in the main room and a hidden door behind it should open. Enter into this secret room and you'll see the Nova Trigger 4 (the WASH-BASIN)!

Now for the last piece of the Damocles-smashing puzzle and that's the lethal NOVABOMB (handle with care and beware that you don't carry the four Nova Triggers for longer than an hour as the combined radiation strength of all four triggers can finish you off). Go to the Storage Depot outside UR CITY on GAEA and go down to the basement. There's an expensive PIANO down here for any would be 'antique dealer'/thief to purloin but it's the NOVABOMB we're after here. Pick it up, go back out the Storage Depot and you can now head off to Damocles for the final act.

When you get to Damocles (or rather if you get there in time) go down and land on the surface and drop the NOVABOMB. Now back away from DAMOCLES to a nice safe distance and switch on each of the Nova Triggers (in any order). When the fourth Nova Trigger is activated the NOVABOMB activates, DAMOCLES is blown to smithereens and you're 25,000,000 credit up in your bank account (sounds good to me).

A longer winded way of blowing Damocles up involves collecting together 8 explosives from various places around the DIALIS solar system but we'll leave that solution for this issue. After all that just sit back and enjoy a job well done (and maybe spend some of that loot in a Casino or do a pub crawl between Annie's Bar and Hathaway's Bar (just don't fly drunk!).

THE TELEPORTS: WHERE THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY TAKE YOU

Teleport 0 — GAEA — Ur City (07-01)
Teleport 1 — ERIS — Bare Island (06-02)
Teleport 2 — DION — Birmingham Island (03-14)
Teleport 3 — METIS — Doobers Solicitors (00-06)
Teleport 4 — VESTA — Vesta Parliament (04-06)
Teleport 5 — ERIS — Capital City (11-08)
Teleport 6 — GAEA — Chaldea Metropolis (08-08)
Teleport 7 — LOGOS — Logos City (04-02)
Teleport 8 — BACCHUS — Bacchus Waystation (02-08)
Teleport 9 — MENTOR — Mentor Waystation (09-07)

THE NOVA TRIGGERS: WHAT THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY ARE

Nova Trigger#1 (Sideboard) — (Hantzen's New House) UR CITY (07-01)
Nova Trigger #2 (Cupboard) — (Post Sorting Office) SNOW ISLAND (00-03)
Nova Trigger #3 (Hi-Fi) — (Trading Post 15) CHALDEA (05-06)
Nova Trigger #4 (Washbasin) — (Nixon International Court) METIS (05-06)
Novabomb — UR CITY (09-02)

THE KEYS AND THEIR LOCATIONS:

Key B — Bear Island (06-05)
Key C — Lawson Bank, Metis (01-03)
Key D — Annie's Bar, Dion East, Dion
Key E — Birmingham Island, Dion (03-14)
Key F — Capital City (15-12)

Does anyone know the location of Keys A and H (and (if it exists) Key G)?

DAMOCLES BITS AND PIECES

■ The BRIEFCASE found in the POLITBURO CITY (location 04,06) on VESTA allows you to hold more than 10 objects.
■ The UNIVERSAL SUIT protects you from extreme heat, cold and pressure and can be found at location 09-14 on BIRMINGHAM ISLAND on DION.
■ You may well have found the TV and enjoyed the programmes being broadcast on it but have you tried the GHETTOBLASTER? If not then go to LOGOS and in CHARLENE'S DISCO (location 06-03) (complete with dancing man on the roof) you'll find this Mega-Watt Monster of a GHETTOBLASTER. Turn it on and what do you get? Why the tune from *Backlash* of all things! Nothing like a bit of self promotion there methinks.
■ If you want to get into the NOVAGEN OFFICE and read up on all sorts of juicy programmer/program secrets then go to ANNIE'S BAR at DION EAST on DION and pick up KEY D. From here go to BIRMINGHAM ISLAND (also on DION) and go to location 02-11 where the Novagen Offices reside. Go in and enjoy rummaging through the letters, memos and bits of information lying around. If you want to see what's in the SAFE then first go get the TIMED DETONATOR from location 06-02 on BEAR ISLAND on ERIS and while you're on that island get some explosives from location 06-05 (there's three to be found). Take these back to the Novagen Office, go in and get the SAFE and bring it outside. Arm the TIMED DETONATOR by first selecting the time using the + and — keys (20 seconds should do) and then press 3 on the keypad to set the explosive power rating (any lower a rating than 3 and it won't break open the safe, any higher and there's no safe left to break open afterwards!). Now select an EXPLOSIVE in your inventory window, press * to arm it, quickly drop it *on top* of the SAFE and then *walk away quickly!!!*. The SAFE will blow and inside you'll find some rather interesting secret documents.

DAMOCLES HELP WANTED!

Well, I must admit that even I'M stuck in this mammoth game! Has anyone out there found a use for the GREENHOUSE EFFECT item? Or the AMPLIFIER, anyone located any TIME TRAVELLING devices yet? How do you use the RED and BLUE LOCATOR BEACONS (found at 04-04, POLITBURO CITY, VESTA and 02-01 on MENTOR respectively). Most importantly of all, has anyone cracked the MIDAS puzzle yet? I know that ACHERON holds part of the solution to the puzzle but that's about all. Oh and has anyone managed to pinch anything from the MUSEUM on CRONOS yet? One more thing: once you've got EAGLE 9SE try crashing into the water of ERIS for a nice effect. If you've found any interesting locations, objects in the *Damocles* 'world' or solved any of the other solutions then let me know, we need ALL the help we can get with this game. Hopefully we'll solve it before the next *Mercenary* installment arrives! Hmmmmm, that reminds me, what IS this I'm hearing about a *MERCENARY III — UNIVERSE*, Novagen???

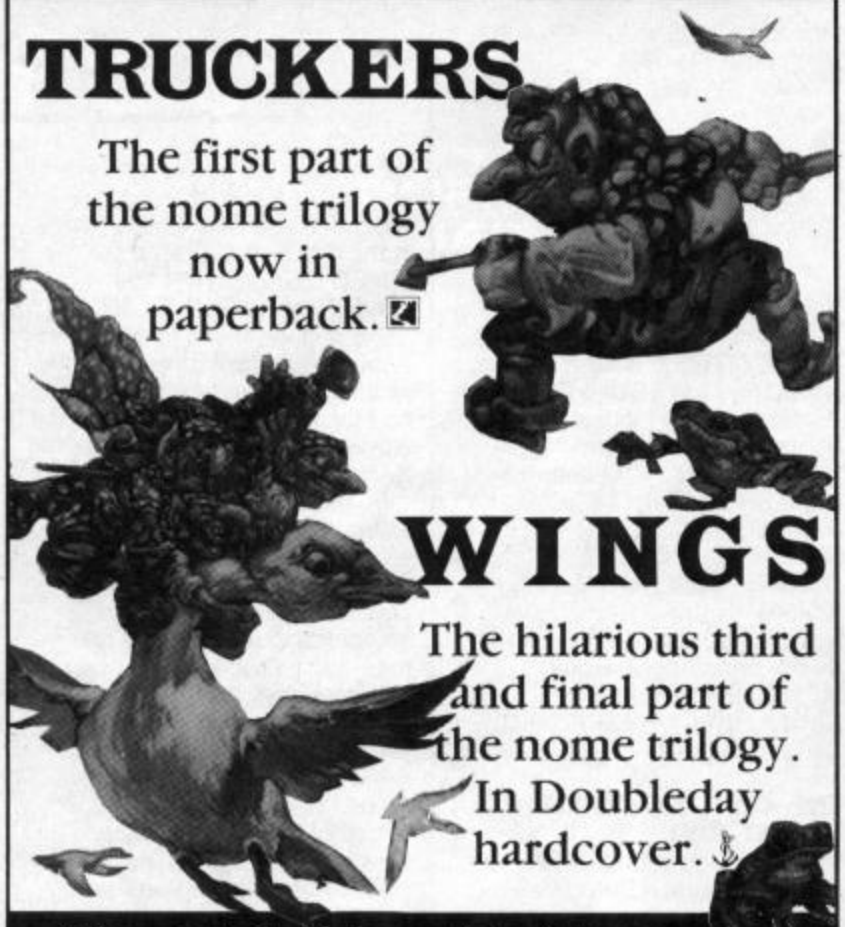
CASTLE MASTER
(Incentive/Domark)

The Freescape games are always entertaining although I must confess that *Total Eclipse* is still my personal favourite and I just haven't had the time to play through this

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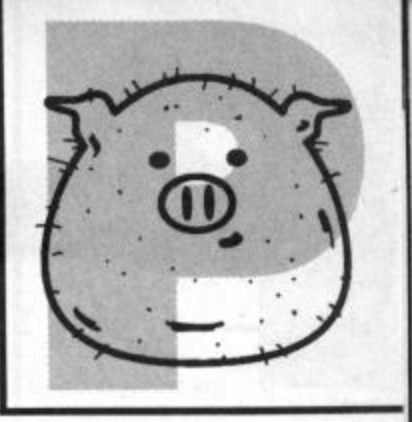
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Access VISA

PIG IN A POKE!



game. Kevin Bowley **of Barnsley, South Yorkshire came up with a map for all levels of the C64 game and Incentive's** Ian Andrew **himself provides some useful tips. If only Ludlow Castle was this exciting!**

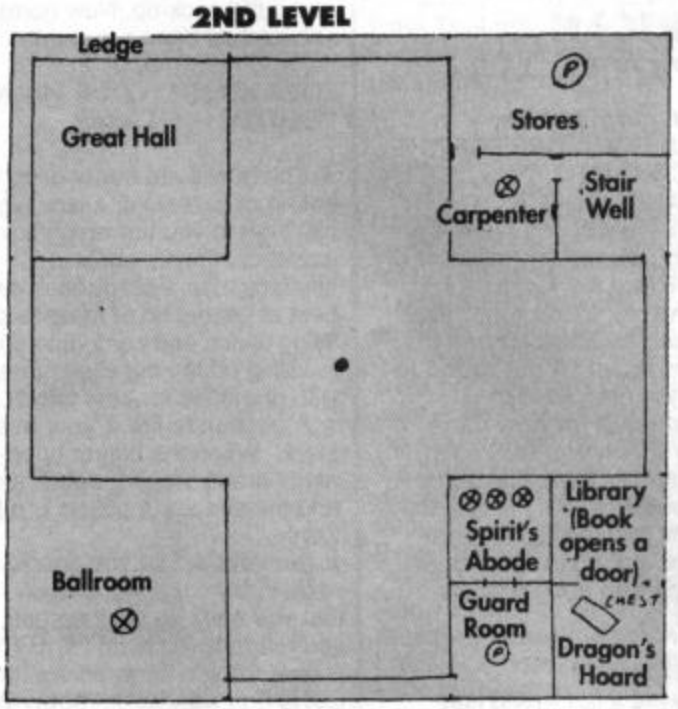
TIPS FOR CASTLE EXPLORATION

★ All 20 ghosts must be killed before the Dragon can be killed. To kill the Dragon, bombard him with rocks. Shooting the panel when stood on the drawbridge will catapult you onto the chapel roof.

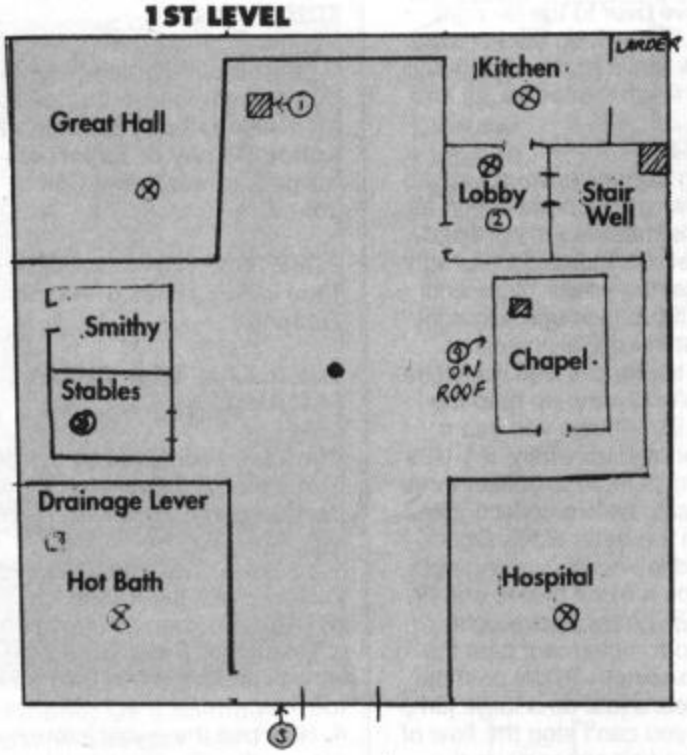
★ Run at the boulder with full strength to reveal the trapdoor. Activate both switches in the Magister's Room to remove the disappearing wall and obtain the captive key.

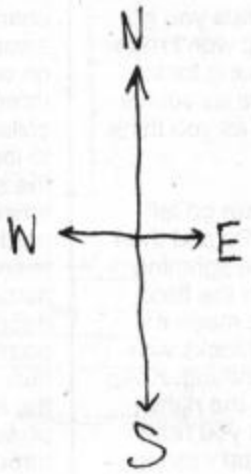
★ To unlock the final door, crouch before the brown handle. When you collect the rock movement potion from the guard room. Throwing a rock at a doorway will instantly transport you through it. Throw a rock at the flag to release a ghost.

2ND LEVEL



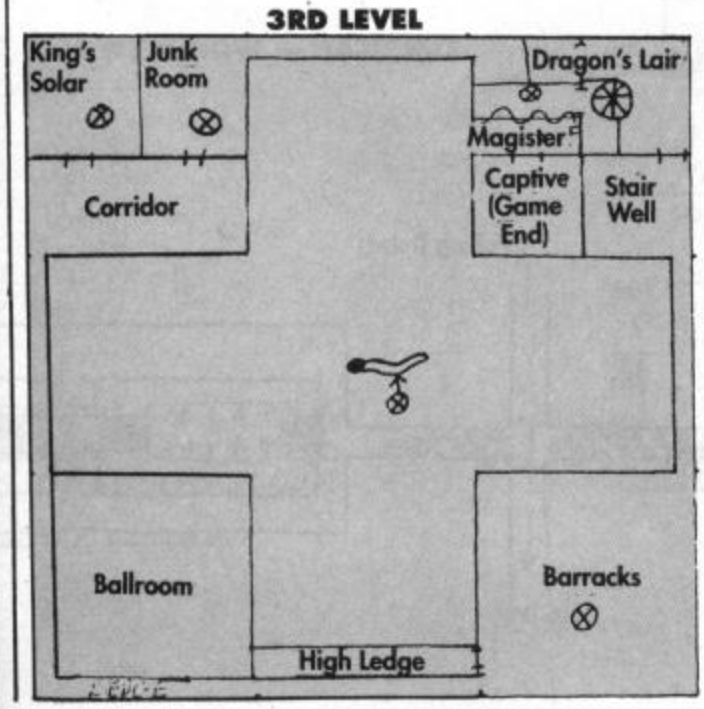
1ST LEVEL





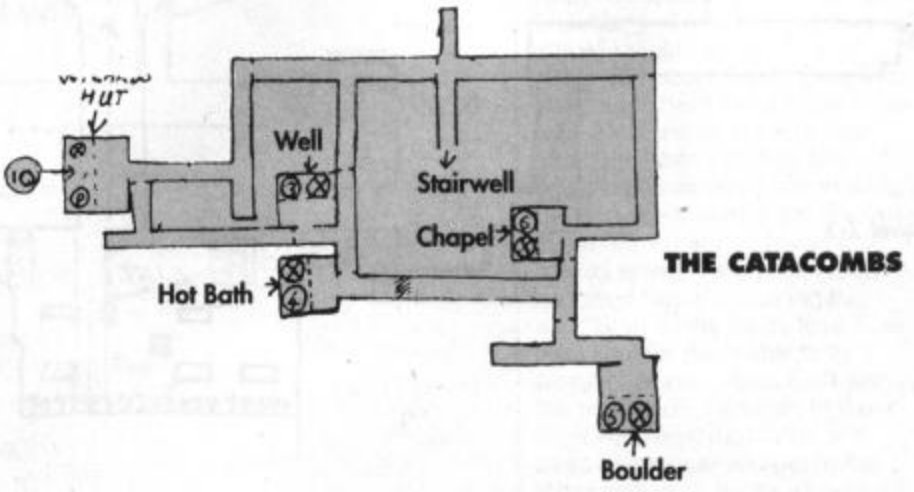


3RD LEVEL



Wizard's Hut (West of Castle)





THE CATACOMBS



PIG IN A POKE!

TURRICAN
(Rainbow Arts)

First off, may I just say THANKS EVERYONE FOR THE TURRICAN MAPS, TIPS, SOLUTIONS AND ALL THE OTHER BITS! That said, can I just say please no more! The amount of stuff I've had for *Turrican* is unbelievable, loads more than what I had for *Batman* and it's still coming in! I'll get round to saying thanx to everyone eventually but for now can I just say thank you to S Allan, Mat Hampson, Colin Davison **and especially** Craig Stewart **and** Scott MacDonald **of Cumbernauld in Glasgow for their great tips and good illustrations.**

CORRECTIONS!

Things went a tad wrong last month in the *Turrican* tips with text jumping around and winding up in all sorts of wrong places (tips for Level 2-2 also appeared a month early to add to the fun of it all). Some of the text from the Turrican C64 Cheat wound up in the tips for Level 1-3 and vice versa.

Step 1.

Look in the LEVEL 1-3 tips at the start for the block of text beginning 'trigger point 1-UP's,' and swap this with the block of text in TURRICAN C64 CHEAT beginning with 'the lower ledge and leap onto the small ledges above the spikes,'. Simple.

Step 2.

The block of text in the TURRICANNY TIPS from 'up the power ups.' (following the tips on using mines) should be ignored for World One as it's the solution to Level 2-2 (which is printed in this issue).

Thank you for waiting, sorry about the cock-up. Now normal service has been resumed.

TURRICANNY TIPS (CONTINUED)

★ The mines are better used to get rid of barriers or aliens which can't get to you but which pose a nuisance, they're useless for anything else. Energy lines can best at getting rid of masses of flying aliens and contribute a lot to killing off the big aliens (use with grenades for best effect).
★ A good auto-fire is your best friend. When the bigger opponents aren't around, switch it on and the stream of bullets is a lifesaver.
★ Remember that you can fire while in Gyroscope mode and that you can't go back up until you return to Turrican form. This is useful if you know where the exit is and want to get down to it fast and this tactic is especially handy on World 4 allowing you to pass by most of the aliens quickly — providing you don't fall down a dead end.
★ Once you've killed an alien no matter how many times you go past the spot again it won't reappear, don't hang around for too long in any one place as you've never as much time as you think.

Level 2-1

From the start you can go left and pick up two 1-UPs and then move down using the lightning blast to hack through the floor. The enclosed rooms mean it's easier to get power blocks with one sweep of the lightning. Keep going down towards the right side of the level until you reach the combined down/up moving spikes. Go left past these and continue left and down (going up and right to get round the maze), the Big Piranha Fish appears after the maze.

To kill the Big Fish and the small fish before it, turn into a gyroscope as you reach the big pool and run over all the small fish. Moving left and right to get them all before tackling the BIG fish. To kill Mr Piranha stay by the right side of the screen and leap up and fire grenades at its mouth, follow this with the energy lines and then laser fire until the fish moves near. Use the lightning flash on its mouth when it's directly above you and duck when it comes down otherwise its lower jaw will get you. A vertical shaft appears to the right when the fish is killed. Go down and move over to the far right and up and pick up the 4 1-UPs. Go back down and fall down the shaft to finish the level.

Level 2-2

A switch from downward vertical to rightward horizontal action as nears the most vicious of opponents yet. Go to the left and lightning blast the power block and pick up the power ups. Go right and past the up/down spikes, leap on the blocks and reveal the power block, jump up onto the lift. The lift will take you into a chamber high up where 6 1-UPs await (you'll need to collect three on one side before collecting the three on the other side). Once collected fall down pushing right to land on a block before you hit the spikes below. Move right, timing your movement past the up/down spikes. To get past the falling debris just do a large jump across, you can't stop the flow of debris but you can rack up the points by lightning blasting it as it falls. Once past go down and to the far right to get the hidden power ups. Jump up and go through into the open chamber and use the gyroscope to get past the four blocks (if you shoot them they start moving and draining your energy at fast speed so DON'T!).
Once past, nip through the up/down spikes and run over to reveal the World 2 Pincer Alien. You can either stand on the right-hand side of the ledge near the entrance and use everything on the Pincer Alien or you can gyroscope past it and hit it from behind (the latter is recommended as the Pincer Alien takes a lot of hits and doesn't stop moving forward until it's crushed you). Use the combination of grenades and energy lines first and then finish it off with the lightning blast. Now go to World 3!

TURRICAN C64 CARTRIDGE POKE

M Hewett **of Foreham, Hants dug out some infinite pokes for *Turrican* but you need an Action Replay or Expert cartridge to enter these C64 pokes.**

POKE 3030,173 — Unlimited Time POKE 16365,0 — Unlimited Weapons

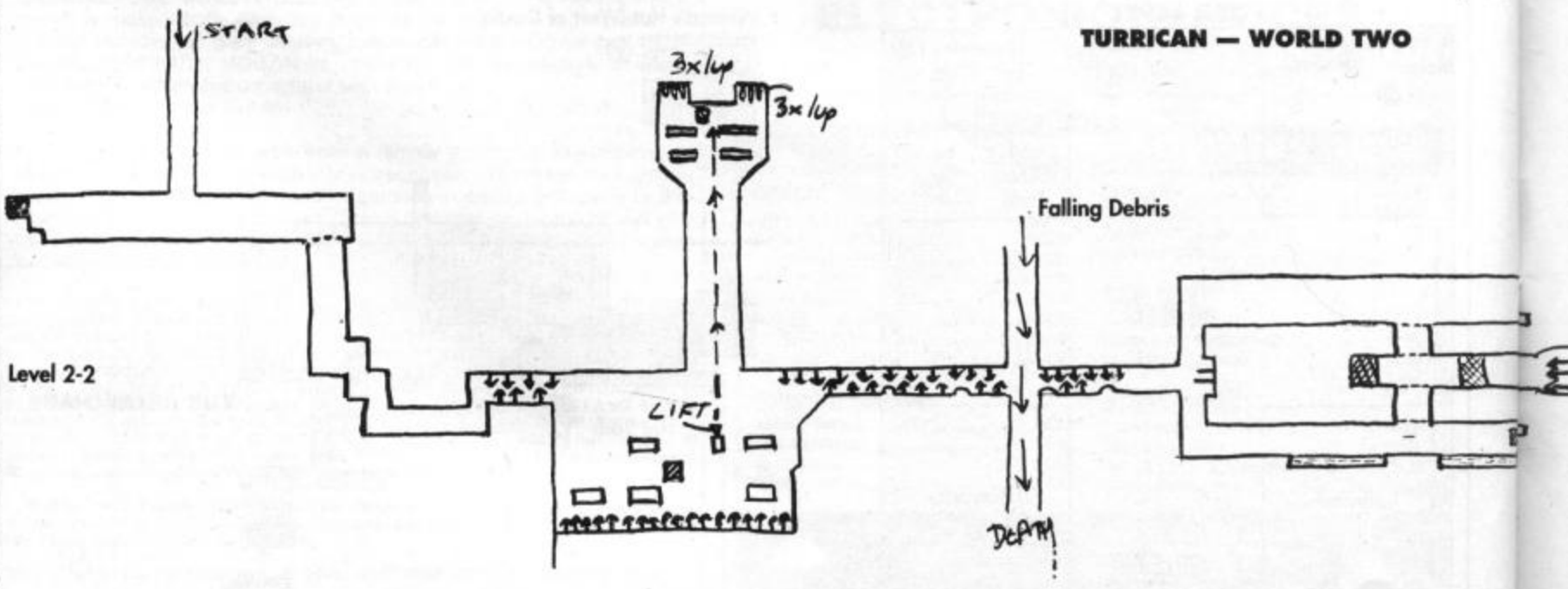
TURRICAN C64 CHEAT (AGAIN!)

If you were confused by the error of last month then fear not, here's the C64 cheat again!

1. Load up the game as normal
2. Hold down the Pause key (CTRL) and keep it held down.
3. Hold down the FIRE BUTTON as well and keep this held down too.
4. Now use the joystick to move around the alien-less level to your heart's content.

NOTE: To tackle the end-level guardians (necessary if you want to complete the game) just

TURRICAN — WORLD TWO



release the Pause and press FIRE to continue as normal. Once the big bad guy is defeated just re-enter no aliens mode using the above method.

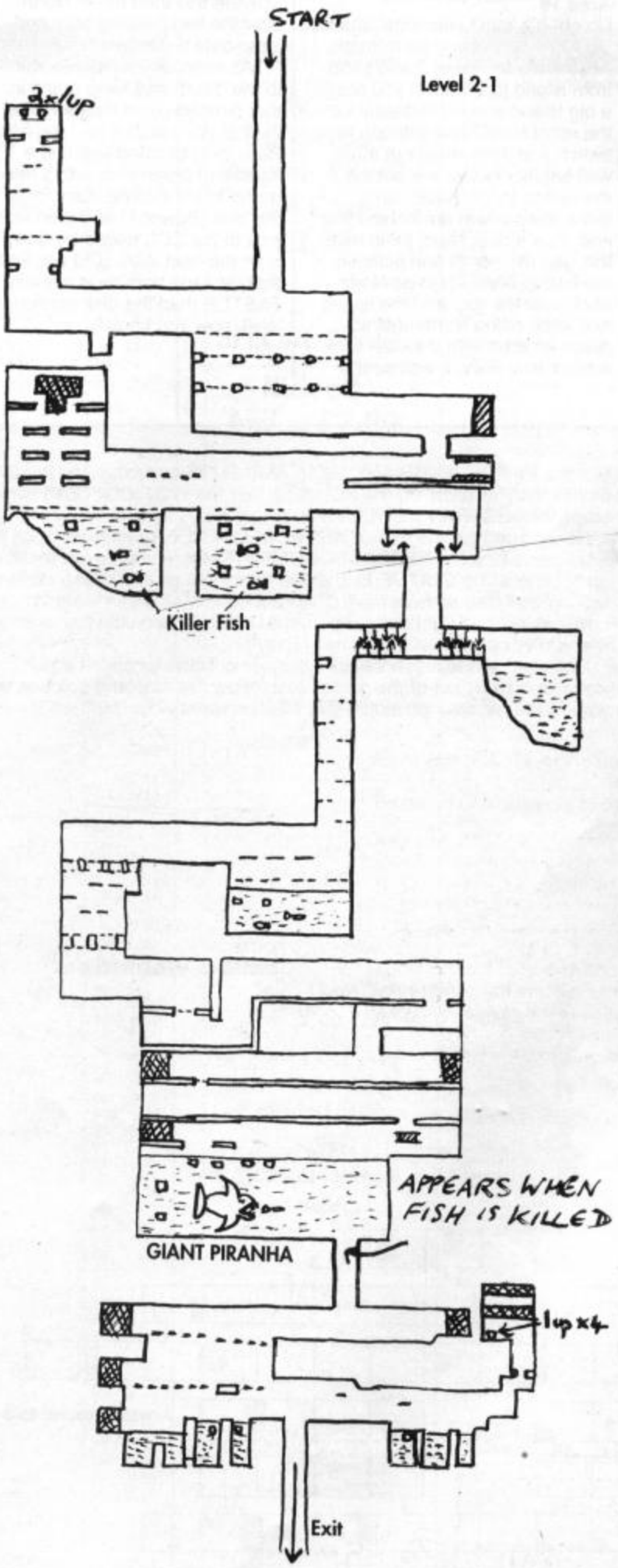
TURRICAN AMIGA CHEAT

To complement all the cheating going on in C64 *Turrican* here's the slightly-easier-to-enter Amiga cheat.

1. Play the game until you get a high score (a minimum of 50000 is required if you start anew).
2. Enter BLUESMOBIL as your name
3. Start the game and you should have infinite energy, maximum lives and maximum weapons (try not to fall down holes though!)



Next month we'll continue deeper and deeper into *Turrican* territory with the maps for the vertical levels 3-1 and 3-3, the maze of level 3-2 and maybe the maps for world 4 (depending on space) and fingers crossed for some music/infinite lives listings.



SNARE
(Thalamus)

Not too far to go now as we explore the delightful levels from Area 13 to Area 16 of this fiendishly devious puzzler from Thalamus. Think yourself lucky if you've got this far it gets REALLY tough from here on!

Area 13
Can't stop! Can't jump!
Not stopping is no problem, not being able to jump however is really frustrating! Go South and build a wall to force the robot to go North through the gap in the wall (this robot is a TRACER robot bridging gaps with tiles where there are no tiles). When the robot returns go North along the path it has made until you reach the teleporter and go through it. Now build a wall to force the robot to have to deactivate the switch and then go North, East then South until you reach a square of red tiles that has a funny switch in it (robot snoozer). Activate it and then go West and South, past the sleeping robot and onto a ledge. From here go South onto the island, then East to the next, then South to the next and activate the switch here. Next travel West to the next island and the West again, followed by North and then activate the switch on this island. Finally go East to the next island and use the teleporter and then South again over the bar to the EOL teleporter.

Area 14
A straight shoot-'em-up this one although you can't create a trail on this level! This level is simply four areas connected by teleporters, with one robot in each area. Kill all the robots to reveal the EOL teleporter in Area 4. Watch out for the homing alien that appears from the start but he only needs one hit. Next to the teleporter in the middle of the level is a random movement alien requiring two hits, make sure you're stationary when you tackle this alien.

Area 15
Reduced speed this time which is a blessing of sorts as you can actually stop!

Fly due South from where you start, and shoot three holes in the wall. Move up to the hole, and shoot the alien you can see once, he turns into a tracer alien. Let him come across the gap and avoid him creating tiles as it moves along. Turn back North and then turn West along the wall. Stop a little bit in, face East then wait for the tracer to fly North past you. Head East with the trail on until you get to the East wall. now turn West and keep going until you get to the West wall, turn South along it for



PIG IN A POKE!

a bit, stop, face North and wait for the alien to pass you. Head North with the trail on until you reach the alien trail. Now head back East, jump South over the wall you first created and through the gap you created in the wall, on the alien's trail. As soon as you're over, turn West and go over the flashers, turn South and jump the gap at Power 2, turn East over two more flashers and teleport. Head South and turn on a switch, which creates an arrow trail which you're forced to follow. When you head East shoot the wall in front of you, allowing an alien to come out which deactivates a switch and turns on a teleporter which you are directed onto. All you need to do now is head over the flashers and onto the level teleport.

Area 16

Uh oh! It's 'can't stop time' again Go North, West and then South. Accelerate to Power 2 and jump from island to island till you reach a big island and immediately kill the robot here. Next activate the switch and then shoot out three wall segments that are behind the switch to the South, and three more which are behind this wall after a gap. Next, jump over this gap (Power 3) and activate the switch here. Then go North, back over the gap and the island and keep going North until you reach an area with a switch and a robot in it. Build a wall so the robot runs over the switch then activate the switch, go North over the bridge and then wait for the robot to deactivate the switch on the other side. A new switch should appear on your side so activate this then travel North over the two flashing bars and jump onto the teleporter (Power 2). As soon as you appear, turn to the South and keep going in that direction (two jumps Power 3) until you reach a flashing bar. Pass over this and you find a square of green tiles with a teleporter in the middle. Jump over the tiles (Power 1) and then teleport to the EOL teleporter and onto the next load. (Did you know that the tape version is actually FASTER than the disk version! Well, now you know!).

KENDO WARRIOR
(Byte Back)

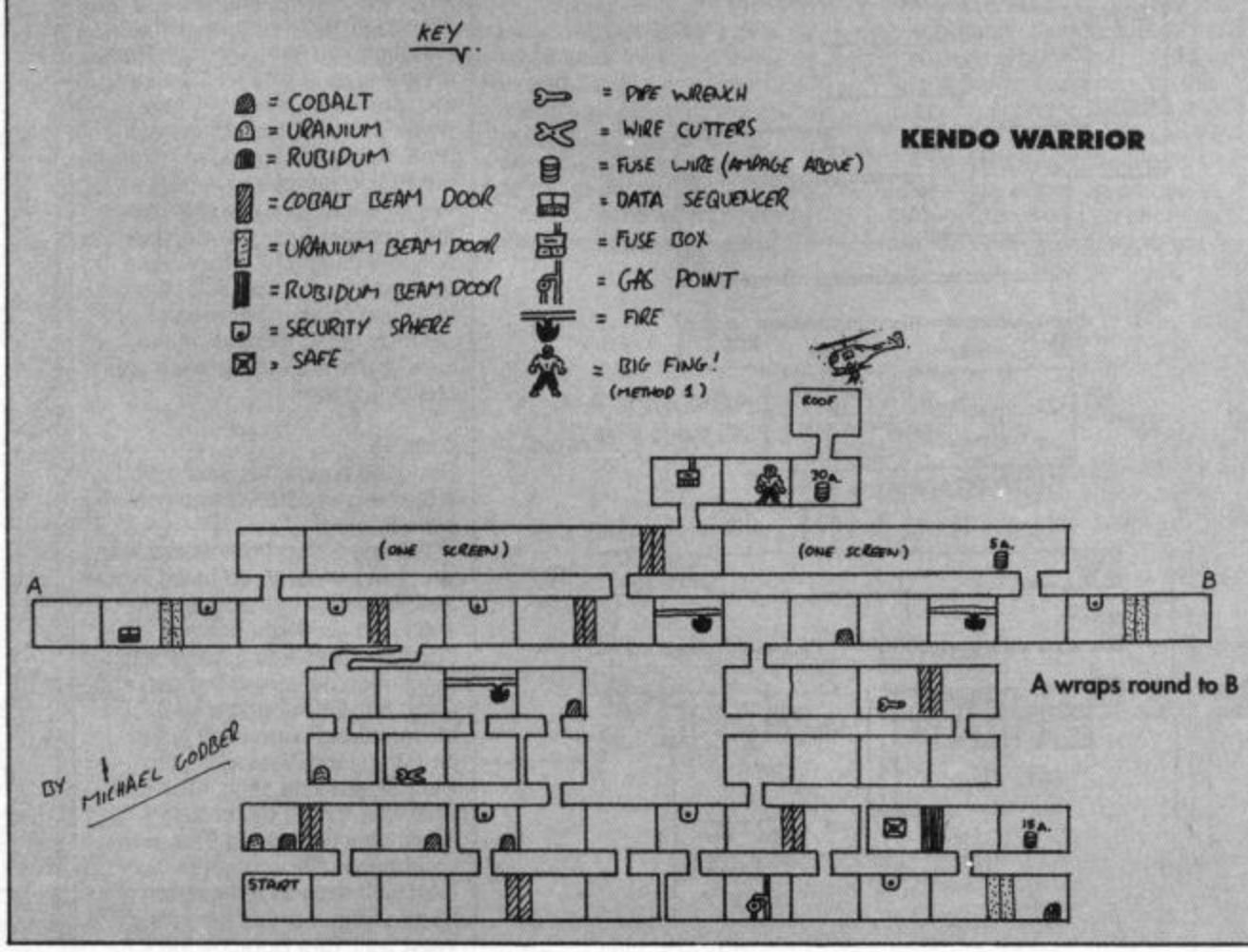
For ages I've been meaning to put a map and tips for this neat little game in the tips section. It's been ages since we reviewed the game but here we are with Mark Andrews **and** Michael Godber **providing tips, solutions and maps.**

Get the PIPE WRENCH and the 15 AMP FUSE and take it to the GAS SUPPLY. (This turns off the FLAMES). Get the WIRE CUTTERS (which stops the SECURITY DEVICES hitting you).

Now go and get the AUTO DIGITAL SEQUENCER which will open the SAFE, revealing the SECRET DOCUMENTS. Once you've got these go up to where the STATUE is and the lights will go out. Keep on jump kicking until the two eyes have disappeared. Go left until the lights come on again. now go right and jump up the HOLE. Take on the four enemies and you've completed the game!!!! Easy!!

Note: Not all the locations are mapped; only the locations which help towards completion of the game. Just follow the map and solution and you should get through alright (like a fish in water???).

Enemy Dog: Use the sword, a leg sweep or crouch, and kick to kill.
Black Ninja: Jump Kick will do the trick
Star throwing Ninja: Jump kick or sword to the middle to bump off



SNARE POKES CORRECTION

Ho hum! Here we go again. A few annoying little bugs crept into the ***Snare*** **listing which could have posed problems for people new to the 'delights' of user-friendly C64 BASIC (ahem).**

Lines 20 and 30 contain a LEFT and RIGHT statement respectively, these don't work as they are but do work when a dollar ($) sign is put after each statement.

Thus line 20 should read **20 L=ASC(LEFT$(A$,1)): L=L-55: IF L<5 THEN L=L+7**

and line 30 should read **30 R=ASC(RIGHT$(A$,1)): R=R-55: IF R<5 THEN R=R+7**

The less than sign < mysteriously changed into a greater than > and gained a closed bracket symbol) in the process. The statement in line 30 which contained the rogue symbols should now be IF R<5 THEN R=R+7

Hopefully there'll be no cock-ups between me typing this and the magazine appearing in the shops!

No set of tips really stood out this month so the £30 software voucher remains firmly in the ZZAP! offices. To be in with a chance of winning it though how about a solution for Vivid Image's excellent *Time Machine*, US Gold's pretty but infuriatingly tough *Gold of the Aztecs*, *Paradroid '90*, *Heatseeker* and anything else that's worth its weight in tips. More *Damocles* tips are most certainly welcome and tips on *Midnight Resistance*, *Blood Money* and more on *TV Sports: Football* may well appear next month. Until then though — happy tipping!!

The address is (surprise, surprise) *Pig in a Poke*, *Newsfield*, *The Case Mills*, *Temeside*, *Ludlow*, *Shropshire*, *SY8 1JW*.

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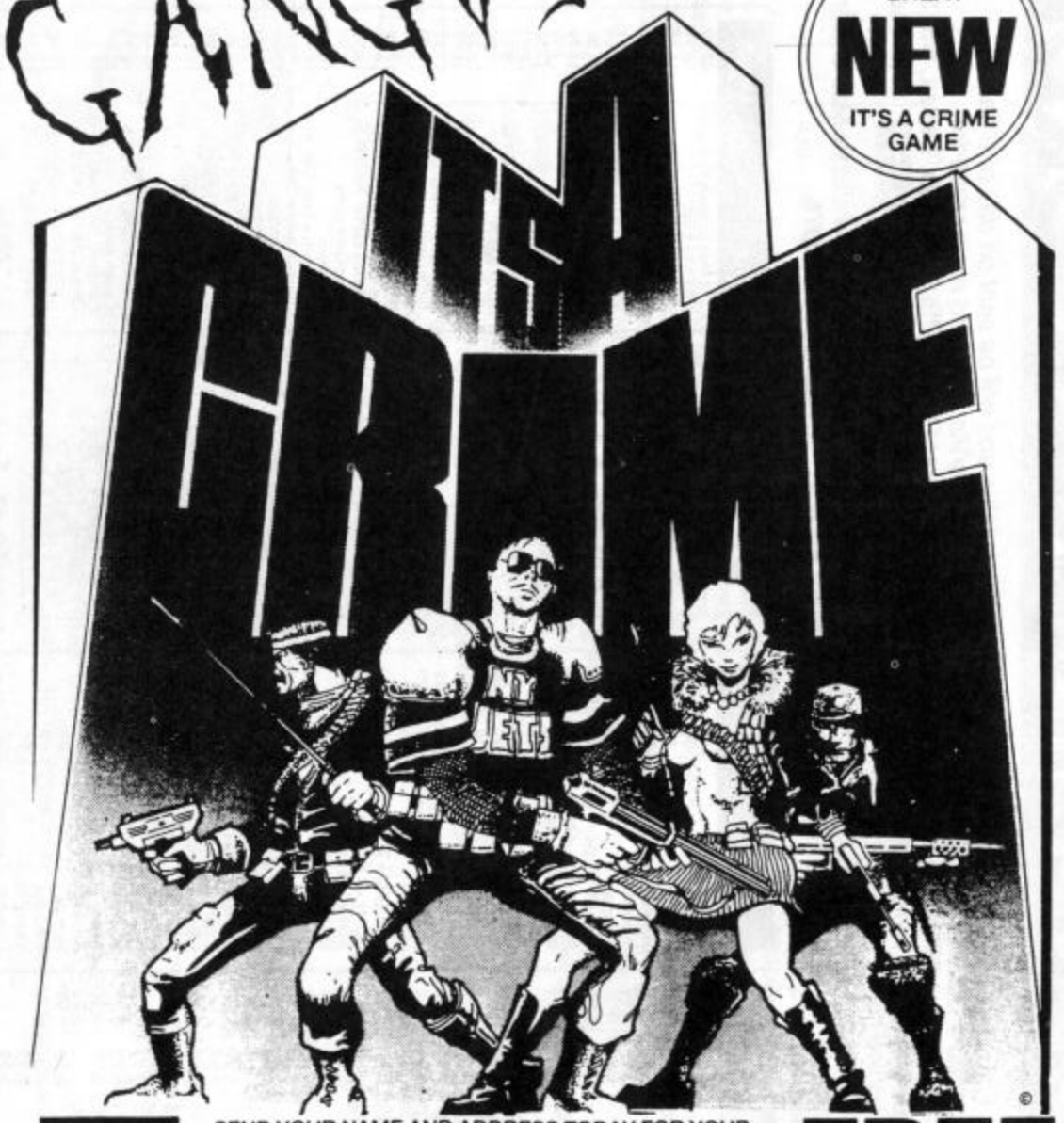
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THE PREVIEWS

THERE'S A STORM COMING

With their debut program *Silkworm* instantly reaching the dizzy heights of Sizzler-dom in in Issue 49, development team The Sales Curve haven't looked back with *Ninja Warriors*, *Continental Circus* and *Gemini Wing* to their credit. Imminent is the establishing of a new label by The Sales Curve titled Storm as they mature into a full blown software house (they're looking for C64 programmers — see the ad somewhere in this issue). Titles on the cards for the Storm label are mainly coin-op conversions to start with but original product is to follow. First off is *St. Dragon* in October, an original follow-up to *Silkworm* titled *Swiv* planned for November, (BIG preview and cover tape demo next month), Jaleco's Paris Dakar rally coin-op (and personal favourite of Robin's) *Big Run* and the cutesy *Rod Land* (to be programmed by Random Access). Three brand new coin-ops for conversion, Taito's boxing game *Final Blow* and Technos's *Combatribes* and *Double Dragon III* (no prizes for guessing what that one's about).



★ *SWIV* is a fierce, two-player shoot-'em-up with some very fast graphics. Could be awesome — check out next issue for an in-depth preview. (C64)

ST. DRAGON

It may well be from the coin-op people who brought you *P-47 Freedom Fighter* but it looks a tad like *R-Type* to me. There's nothing too unusual about the concept — blast, blast and blast again — but the main character is a Dragon ship with the ability to flip its tail and that's certainly original. Using the tail, you can swipe out at the bad guys and twist it round as protection against incoming fire — (the tail on C64 version is a bit shorter than the 16-bit version though). In the C64 demo of the first level that we saw, the Patron Saint of Dragons twisted and turned its way through a forest level using laser fire to dispatch the hostiles, picking up bigger and better weapons and all in front of some pretty neat graphics (the explosions are suitably over the top and there's a neat

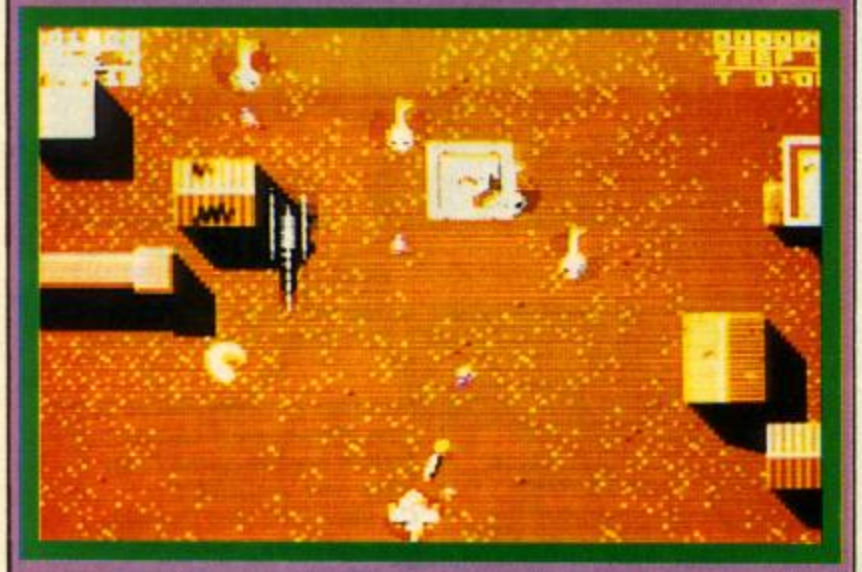
★ Sales Curve's Saint Dragon is based on an R-Type Jaleco coin-op. (Amiga)



★ Storm's debut game *St Dragon* looks quite impressive, here the ship is coiling up its tail to protect against incoming fire. (C64)



metallic Panther to destroy or be destroyed by). The Amiga game comes across really close to its arcade origins with great attention to detail and novel gameplay (even if there are shades of *R-Type*). A good start to the Storm label, long may it thunder!



★ The metallic panther fires loads of homing missiles in the middle of *St Dragon*'s level one. (C64)

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE (Ocean)

A near Sizzler in this issue on the Amiga, programming team Special FX (*Firefly*, *Red Heat*, Amiga *Untouchables*) follow *Midnight* up with the C64 version, delayed slightly because the programmer, Robert Tinman, had to stop work to do Nintendo software. Now Robert's back on the case and *Midnight* is coming together albeit without the two-player mode. *Midnight Resistance* should be finished any day now and Robert has been with it for eight weeks or so (although that should really be 16 weeks considering the hours the project has taken up).

'Memory hasn't really being the problem', Robert told us, 'as it's all multiload for each section; time and the amount of sprites on screen has been the problem, it's one-player to keep the processing time at a respectable speed.'

C'est la vie. After Robert comes back from a break he'll be finishing off *Midnight* and hopefully we should have a review next issue.

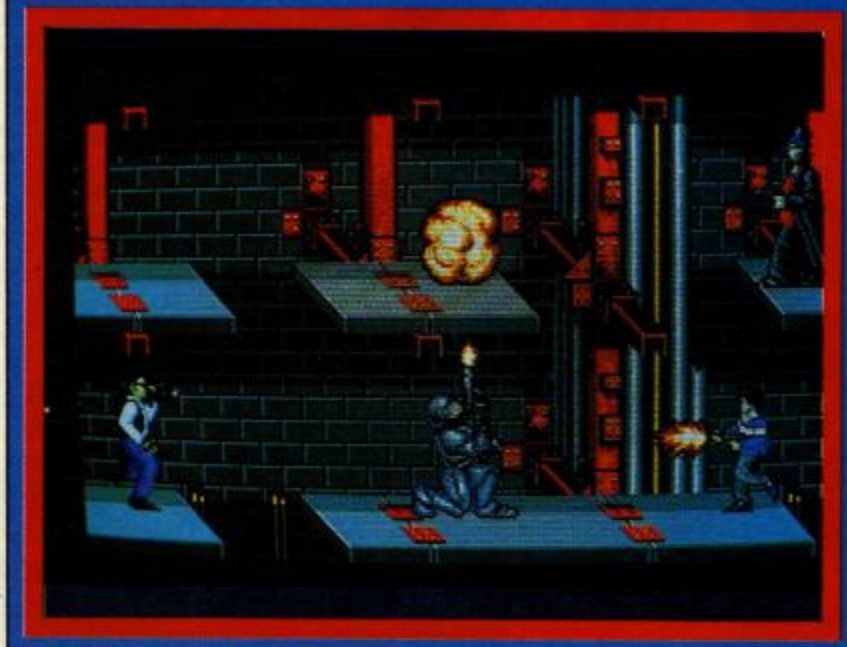
★ Ocean's Midnight Resistance muscles in on the C64.



★ C64 Midnight is long-delayed, but every other version has been superb so hopes are high!

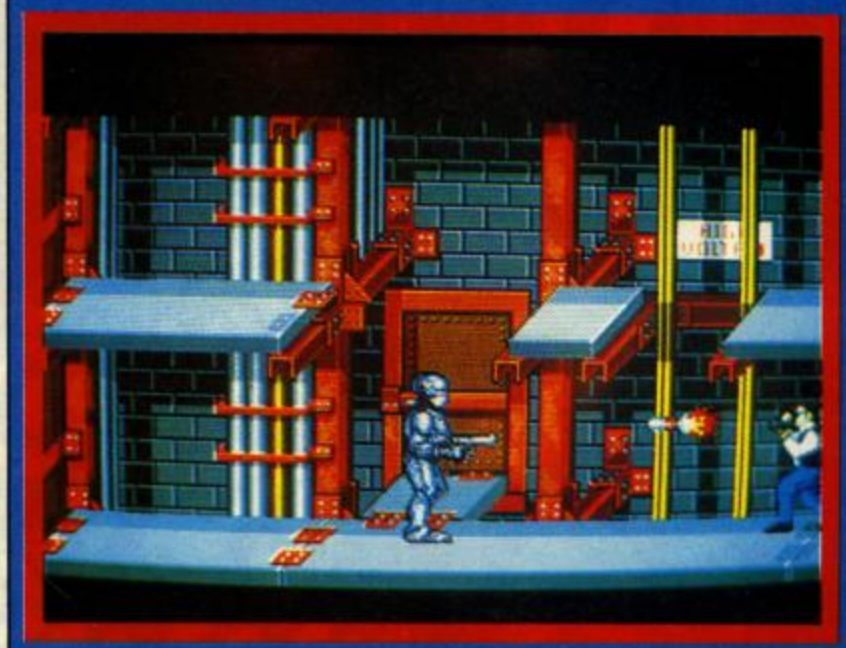


STAY OUT OF TROUBLE! ROBOCOP 2 (OCEAN)



★ The evil Cain lurks in the top-right of the screen. (Amiga)





★ Ocean's RoboCop II will undoubtedly be their biggest release of 1990. (Amiga)

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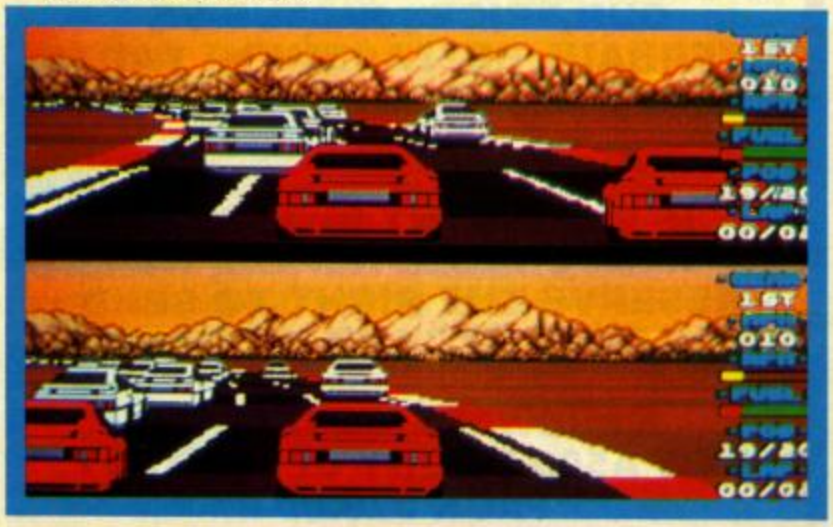
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★ Atari's Badlands is Super Sprint II, set in the future and now being converted by Domark/Tengen. (Amiga)

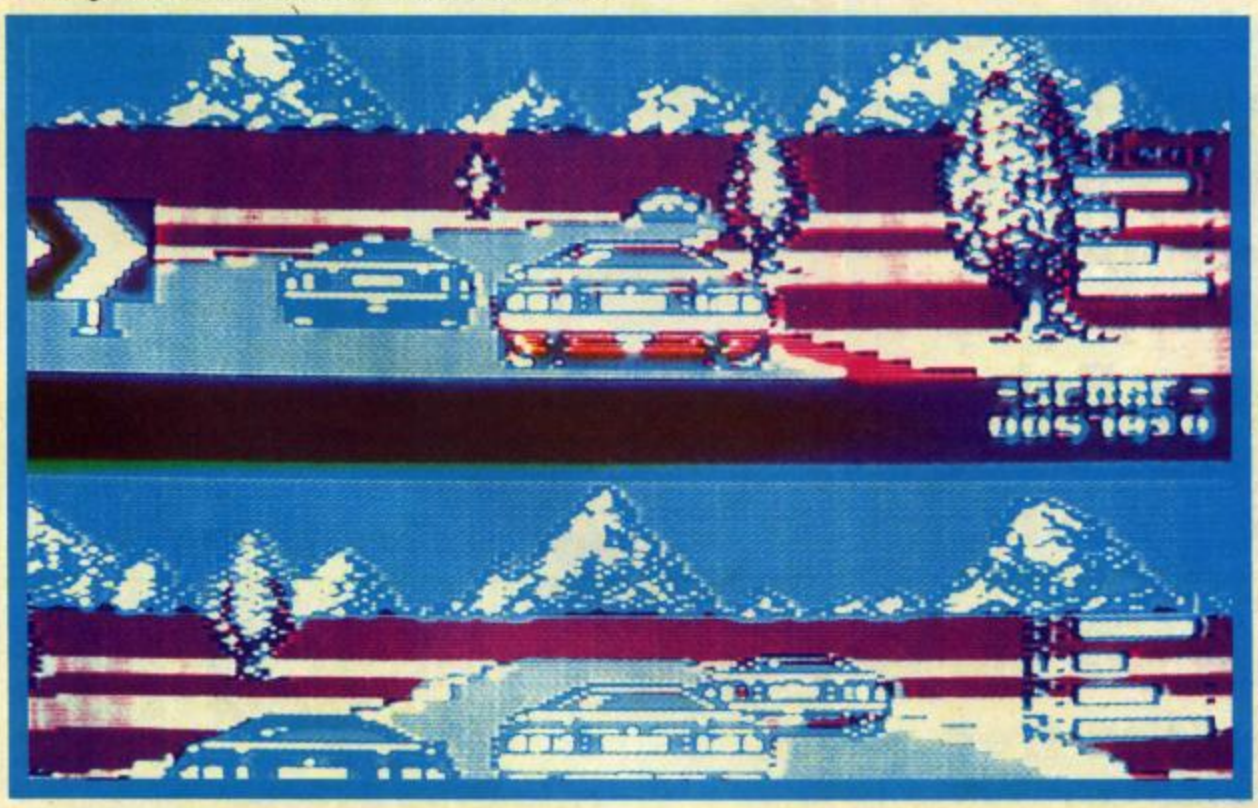


LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE (Gremlin)

★ The absolutely astonishing Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge boasts coin-op speed graphics. (Amiga)



★ Amiga Lotus shows off Gremlin's exhaustive research!



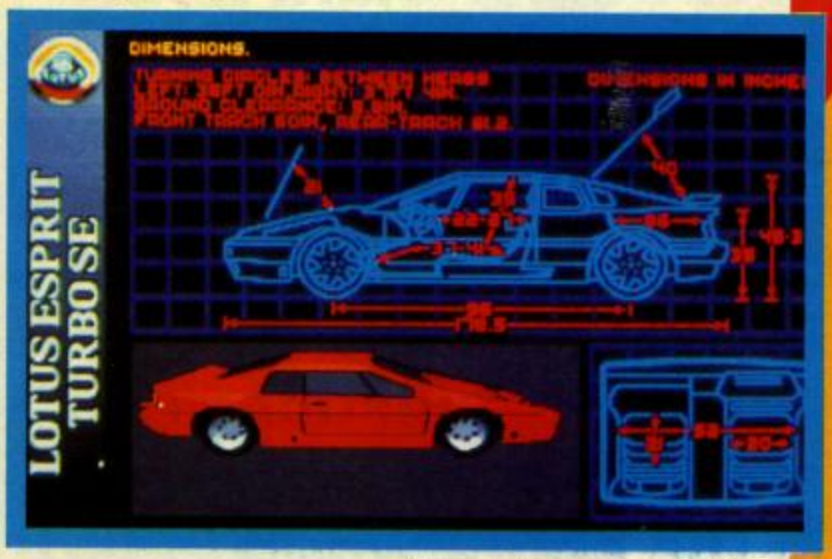


★ The real thing — Gremlin's Lotus Esprit had the full support of the car company.

The trend for most software houses is to license pretty much anything that moves. Gremlin have always been restrained in this area but now they've got the rights to something that literally *does* move. Following *Combo Racer*, the sleek Lotus Esprit Turbo sports car is the star of their latest racer, Gremlin having settled the deal with Group Lotus PLC back in April.

There are a total of 32 different tracks for the three skill levels and the screen is split horizontally for two-car head-to-head action, the second independent screen for the computer pacer or opposing human player. This concept is that of *Pitstop II*, the classic C64 racer reviewed way, waaaaay back in issue two. Indeed, there are pits in *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge* too: dare you risk running out of fuel, or do you make a stop for a quick top-up, wasting valuable time and losing your position in the race?

★ We haven't seen the C64 version of Lotus in action yet, but it certainly seems promising.



We've only seen a few screenshots of the C64 version but Warren has seen Amigâ *Lotus* in action and reports it looks *amazing*. The speed and smoothness of road movement, whether around curves, slopes or hills, is dazzling and perspective is spot-on — highly realistic. One of these displays would be impressive but two simultaneously...! It looks like being the hottest racer this side of the arcades. Look out for a full review next issue.

Not content with one super-fast game, Gremlin have also just acquired a Suzuki licence. *Team Suzuki* will be a vector graphics simulation based on the British Grand Prix-winning, 500cc Team Suzuki bike.

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A

VENUS
the flytrap

After Listeria, Mad Cow Disease, Salmonella and Phil's Footy Mad Sheep, those loony farmers have finally caused a global catastrophe of unimaginable proportions. Through overuse of pesticides all the insects have died out! No more nasty bee stings and ants in your pants maybe, but lots of plants will die without insects to pollinate them. So the loony farmers get barking mad John Gummer to call in the mad scientists. The boffins create a race of cybernetic insects, but these promptly eat some food and turn into psychopathic killers! With Richard Attenborough's favourite topic about to disappear — namely Life On Earth — the scientists develop Venus: The Fly Trap. This isn't a toothy green plant, but in fact the ultimate cybernetic insect killer. You have control of mankind's last hope...

The game has 50 horizontally scrolling levels, divided into ten graphically varied worlds. The basic gameplay is familiar enough: walk right and blast everything that moves, but there are plenty of new ideas to set it apart.

The fly has five vitality units and if they're all lost, the insect returns to the start of the level with one less life. The basic weapon can't run out of ammunition, but has limited range. When the psycho insects are shot they leave pods which can be opened with a bullet to provide bonus points, extra time, brief invulnerability, extra ammo, the ability to fly for a while, extra vitality, an extra life and special weapons. There are five add-on weapons, selected by the function keys, including Big Shot (unlimited range and extra punch), 3-Way Fire (as it sounds, but with extra punch and ammo hungry), Mortar (even more lethal and travels in a very useful arc), Beam Up (hold down fire to build up energy, unlimited range) and 4-Way (limited range, but causes lots of damage and isn't stopped by solid objects).

Providing targets for the firepower are crawlers such as caterpillars, snails, jellybugs and woodworm. There are also hoppers such as pops and rockets, plus static guns and flyers such as wasps, moths and flies. All these come in various sizes, and are supported by Boss Enemies such as a giant firepod and giant caterpillar.

Most of the creepies can happily crawl on the ceiling, as can the Venus Flytrap if you step on a special floor pad to boost it upwards and flip it



★ Leaping to blast a gun emplacement with three-way fire in the Kaverns. Not much ammo left for the special weapons though.

★ The horizontally-scrolling bonus section of Venus, a speedy shoot-'em-up with some very nice background parallax scrolling.



The distinctive graphic style heralds a game that has a very different feel from most shoot-'em-ups. With the choice of weapons it's almost like a platform version of *Cybernoid* with the emphasis on tactics rather than super-fast reactions. Knowing when to use special weapons, and conserving your ammo, is essential. The action is set at a more leisurely pace than most shoot-'em-ups, avoiding much initial frustration. That's not to say the game's a pushover though: it's all too easy to get caught out by the floor pads (especially the inverters) and end up falling smack onto an insect's head. Although an experience not to be missed, walking and jumping on the ceiling also proves disorientatingly hazardous. Overall I think the difficulty's set just about right with progressive levels having extra features and tougher enemies as well as different themed backdrops. For sheer insects appeal, *Venus* is simply out of this world!





★ Walking on the ceiling is one of the hero's neat tricks in the Frozen Wastes.

over. There are also pads for continuous leaps, draining time and preventing jumping! In addition you can look out for 20 secret rooms.

At the end of each world there's a special bonus section where the Venus flies over the clouds, blasting oncoming insect swarms for bonus points without fear of losing a life. A password is also given, so you can restart on the new world when you lose all your lives. You also have up to six continue-plays, but if you use these you can't enter your high score, and there's a two-player mode with players taking turns to play.

Assorted aphids have been a real pain in the office during the past two hot months but *Venus* is one insect that single-handedly compensates for the pesky little things. Although it's based upon simple jump-and-shoot gameplay, there's much, much more on offer than one first imagines. Simply getting used to the robo-insect's jumps is a highly amusing pastime in itself, their height, length and directability (particularly when launched from a hyperjump tile) making Venus's bounds incredibly versatile. With marauding insects, spikes, sheer drops and — on later worlds — plentiful, deviously arranged tiles, landings are very important so jumps have to be quickly mastered, as well as a fast trigger finger.

Backgrounds are nothing to write home but sprites are excellent, colourful, well animated and packed full of detail. Venus himself is superb, one of my favourite sprites *ever*. Brilliantly designed and constantly active, he taps his feet, flutters his wings and wipes his face, and his distinctive walking motion is great. Some of his adversaries are almost as good, beetles' legs moving realistically and snails bustling along in an amusing manner.

Disorientating ceiling-walking (someone been playing Minter's *Ancipital*?), secret rooms, bonus shoot-'em-up levels and high presentation all go to make *Venus The Flytrap* a very full, busy product, as well as a highly addictive one. It's already one of my all-time favourite Amiga games — you'd be a fool to miss it.



This is an excellent reworking of the horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up. The graphics are top-notch, from a nicely shaded sky and landscape to imaginative and atmospheric opponents. What can't be shown by screenshots is the superb animation, particular on Venus itself which periodically washes its mandibles and flutters its wings to create an excellent character. Actual gameplay is different enough to be novel and interesting, but nevertheless takes only a few minutes to get you hooked. The range of weapons not only look good, but are vital to making good progress. The game plays very well indeed, perhaps a bit easy — a single go can take a fair while with all the continue-plays — but extremely addictive. There's a very impressive bonus section, with massive insects and huge swirling caterpillars at the end of the section, and secret rooms. All this for just £20 makes *Venus* very attractive indeed.



★ Inside one of the secret rooms, packed with goody capsules to be blasted open.



PRESENTATION 93%
Nice intro sequence, six continue-plays, secret rooms, vital password system, reasonable disk accessing usually — although it can be a pain in two-player mode.

GRAPHICS 92%
Ten worlds provide plenty of creepy-crawly variety, including a very nice bonus game with huge aliens. Venus itself is excellently animated.

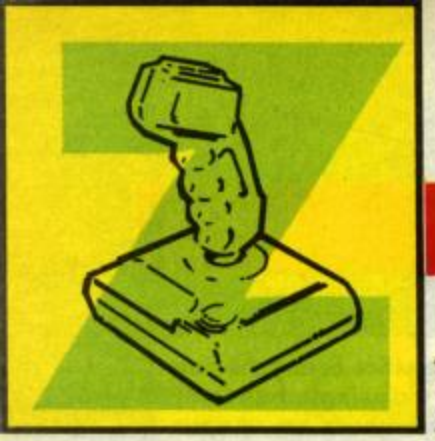
SOUND 82%
Lovely, ambient soundtrack plays along without intruding or irritating. Good spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 92%
Very easy to get into, as hookable as you'd expect of an imaginative shoot-'em-up.

LASTABILITY 90%
50 levels and ten worlds provide a massive challenge, although password system and easy early levels mean anyone can get quite far.

OVERALL 90%

The bee's knees of shoot-'em-ups.



● Millennium,
Amiga £24.99



THUNDERSTRIKE

The game of the Millennium, groan, is *Ground Defence Games*. An audience of billions is captivated by the kamikaze bravery of pilots competing for the coveted title of `Defender of the Ground'. The objective is simply to destroy all the robotic enemy forces, drones and drone generators, before they wipe out your base pyramids. If you lose your bases you're out; if you survive you go through to the next round. (The Games are set in five arenas with ten rounds per arena to survive).

There are also five ships to choose from, each with different flight characteristics. Once in the arena a TV camera follows your ship, providing your remote perspective. You can use joystick or mouse to rotate, tilt, thrust and shoot.

There are two basic types of drone — Saboteur drones (which scuttle over to your bases and destroy them after 10 seconds) and the rest, namely suicidal Lungers, Fighters, Gliders and the mine-laying Bombers. Impacting with drones can knock your energy for six and if you lose all energy you're out of the contest.

So it's a good idea to take out drone generator bases first, then the drones. Destroyed drones often leave behind military hardware pods to improve your ship's firepower and energy. There's a guardian capsule to rotate around your ship destroying nearby drones, and a Turbo pod providing four turbos for short bursts of rapid acceleration.

One novel touch is a black track crisscrossing the arenas, you can Tracklock onto this and it'll move you around at high speed (useful for saving a faraway base). There's also a neat Head-Up-Display providing radar info at close and long range. You can also call up a map for long range navigation and offence/defence stats.

Destroy all drones and enemy bases to complete a round. Now your performance is assessed. If you get a low defence rating power points are taken off your manoeuvrability. Do well and points are added. On the higher rounds there's more enemy bases and faster, more determined enemies. After every 10th round you win a trophy and move to another arena.







It's ironic that while the scenario mocks *F-29* as boring, *Thunderstrike* itself turns out to be simply an updated 3-D *Defender*. The graphics are extremely impressive, I can't think of another game which allows you to fly over — and into! _ such a complex, hilly landscape. *F-29* and *Fighter Bomber* have pyramid mountains and leave it at that.

Thunderstrike cheats a bit, the camera doesn't follow you if the ship jumps up really dramatically, but it's still very nice to look at. The enemy drones are okay, it's surprising how many can attack at once, but they're usually shot at distance. Tactics tend to be limited to spinning around with your finger on fire. But then there's the old defend your bases/attack enemy bases decision, timing when to do what is crucial. The only problem is the lack of variety, the arcade action can't compensate for this.



It's nice to see such an imaginatively presented version of *Defender*: the 3-D `patchwork world' effect is about the best bit of the game. But unfortunately it's about the only improvement. Slugging through ten rounds in the same arena is dull, but when you do get to a new arena the only real difference is the bases are further apart and the landscape changes colour and contours. There are no new gameplay elements, just another ten rounds to blast through. A new arena and horizon colour every 10th level just isn't enough to keep me playing, this game *needs* variety badly. Give me *DataStorm* for a no-messing *Defender* game any day.

PRESENTATION 83%
Plenty of minor options, such as mouse responsiveness, attractive static HUD, static screens and progress reports but no save feature.

GRAPHICS 79%
Good graded horizon and a fast moving, technically excellent patchwork effect but drones are simplistic and variety is lacking.

SOUND 52%
Functional effects but let down by inappropriate (and badly implemented) J.S. Bach tunelets and no ship engine noise.

HOOKABILITY 75%
The idea of *Defender* in 3-D provides instant addiction...

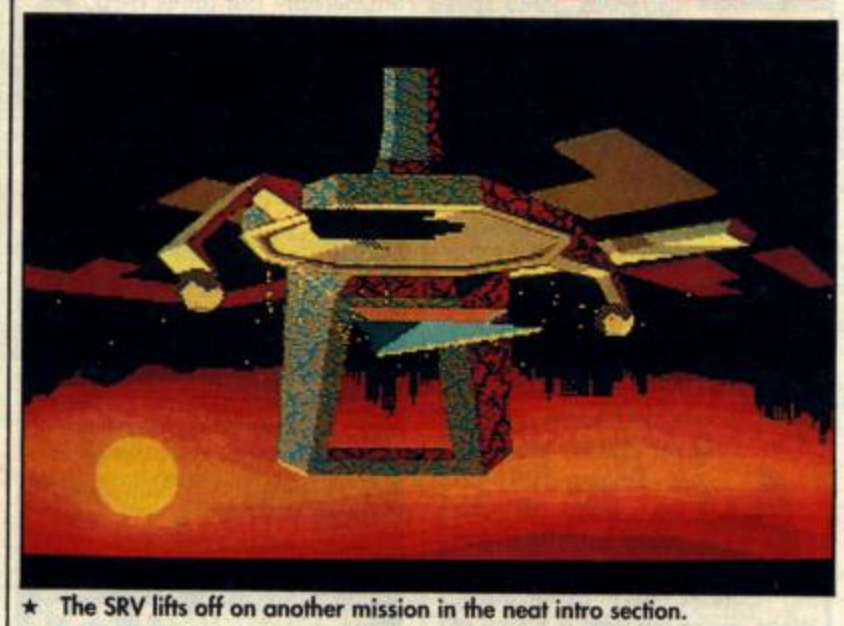
LASTABILITY 61%
...but a lack of new elements or missions limits long-term appeal.

OVERALL 65%

Visually very impressive 3-D *Defender* but lacking depth.

● MicroStyle, Amiga £24.99

SIMULCRA



★ The SRV lifts off on another mission in the neat intro section.

An unspecified time into the future. Man has curbed his bloodthirsty instincts and scrapped all weapons. However, international disagreements still occur so to minimise death and destruction, conflicts are decided within huge simulators. Highly skilled pilots fight it out over computer-generated battlescapes.

But something's gone wrong. A virus has infected Simulcra, the battlescape supercomputer, and given it a power-hungry mind of its own. It's tapping into its rich power reserves and projected some of its battle vehicles — Simulcraft — into the real world. With no weapons to defend themselves against the craft, the humans are helpless and can only run for cover.

You are at the controls of an SRV (Surface Reconnaissance Vehicle), a sleek tank-like craft with extendable wings to enable limited flight. The SRV is the main hope for civilisation: you must attempt to cut off all power lines to Simulcra by destroying its energy projectors.

The rotating projectors are spread throughout the 30 battle matrices, defended by various types of gun emplacements, robots, tanks and jets. The SRV itself is shown from behind and slightly above, the platforms which form the pathways of the current battle matrix stretching panoramically ahead of it.

You can drive the SRV as speedily backwards as forwards, the platforms rotating around the vehicle, *Rotox*-style. The same is true when you switch to flight mode, although the SRV moves faster and isn't restricted to the platforms. Your exact position in the matrix and the direction you're facing can be checked by calling up a map. Red platforms form impassable energy barriers, deactivated by destroying the energy projector that powers it — when all have been destroyed, the main barrier around the matrix is disabled.

The standard SRV is armed with cannons, which mean projectors and most vehicles require a number of hits, but they leave behind pods when destroyed. Some pods give points but others provide extras including radar, missiles, a missile targetting system, and extra energy.



With such a derivative plot and apparently tired game design, I wasn't looking forward to *Simulcra*. But slap my wrists and eat my words, Graftgold's latest 16-bit creation is one of the most immediately playable future combat games ever. The SRV is a speedy and highly manoeuvrable craft, its reverse gear (as fast as forwards) great for getting out of dead ends or dangerous situations. In flight, there's a sense of organised chaos in steering, a bit worrying but all part of the fun of the craft. It moves in smooth, fast 3-D, the matrices spinning about you, platforms coming into view and various adversaries moving on or flying above them. Although some of these opponents are derivative of *Tron* designs, they integrate well with the game to produce a believable computer simulation of a combat zone. Although gameplay's basically shoot-'em-up, there's plenty of exploration involved (frequent references to the map are almost essential), and the search for those elusive projectors and the best places to go for a quick flight mean brain power's needed too.



Simulcra has apparently been in development since before *Zarch*, although the game itself isn't really that complex.

It's a fun shoot-'em-up, lifted above average by attention to detail in both gameplay and graphics. The wide variety of weapons, the different attack patterns of the aircraft, gun turrets and ground vehicles mean there's never time to pause. The graphics are beautifully detailed, with a real *Tron* feel — especially in the 'n'-shaped Recognizers, Solar Sail and MCP-like generators. There's plenty of original stuff too, such as various superb aircraft (including helicopters) which make diving attack runs. It's all very fast, something you appreciate when you've taken off and are zooming over the attractive landscape. Heartily recommended for blast-'em-up fans.

★ Your tank lines up to blast an energy projector, destroying the lethal red barrier.



PRESENTATION 78%
Impressive Simulcraft creation screen, codeword system, matrix maps and clear dashboard display.

GRAPHICS 94%
Fairly smooth, fast-moving filled 3-D landscapes, with atmospheric use of shading. Vehicles are detailed but pixel shading's a little crude.

SOUND 71%
Functional but simple, almost 8-bit effects, pleasant title music.

HOOKABILITY 91%
The SRV's immediately easy and fun to use and the game concept is easily grasped.

LASTABILITY 87%
30 levels of varying layout and increasing size plus a widening array of assailants as you progress.

OVERALL 88%

A playable, easily grasped 'accurate' simulation of a computer combat simulator!



ZZAP!TEST!

● Hewson, Amiga £24.99

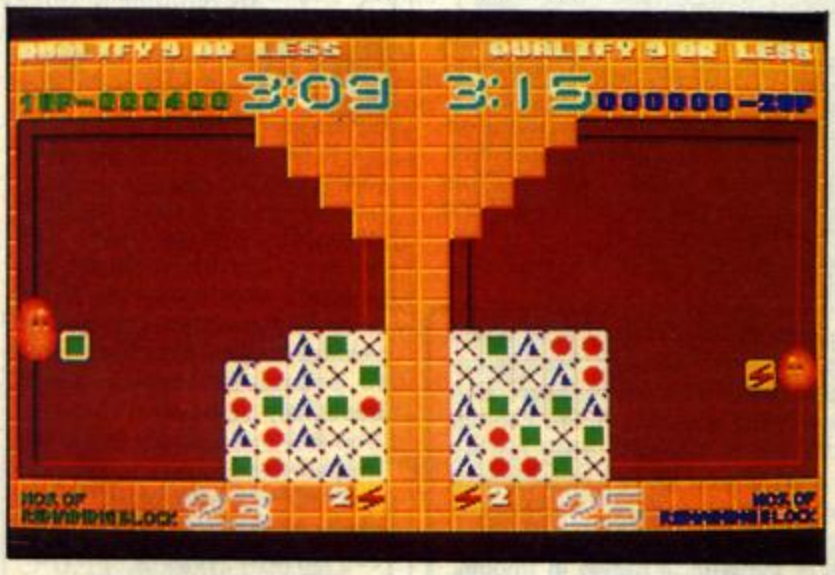


FUTURE BASKETBALL

Supposedly a non-contact sport, in the future basketball is mutated into something more violent than Phil playing *Kick Off*. The game uses an overhead view, with you automatically controlling your player nearest the ball. Dribbling is automatic and you can pass or stand still to shoot (scoring two points, or three if outside the area). To take the ball from an opponent you can slide into them or run over one of the special weapons capsules which appear to automatically shoot at the ball carrier.

Other capsules give money which is important in the four-division league. Up to 32 humans can be in this, all competing to buy the best players. There's five in a team, and you're not allowed substitutes so you must sell a player before buying a new one. You also earn money by winning matches.

★ The computer has a throw-in near to his own basket.





Ho-hum, future sport time again, usually an unsatisfying experience. And Hewson haven't let me down. *Future Basketball* is a rare translation of the ball-dribbling sport but with its metallic arena, tough guy players and plan view it obviously owes a lot to *Speedball*. Unfortunately dribbling and particularly shooting is just too easy; true, it increases game speed considerably but takes away the basketball feel and makes the whole thing disposable — not good at 25 quid. Wait for *Speedball 2* or play *International Basketball* on the 64.



Future Basketball looks like *Speedball*, but doesn't play like it. Zinging balls off the walls in this game leads to a dull throw-in, and scoring baskets isn't as exciting. What you're left with is plenty of extremely fast violence, which is executed well enough — the icon weapons are particularly good fun — but it's all a bit repetitive for the price. Due to a very small radar scanner, tactical play is limited and the management options could also have been better. Still, it is fun to play and was very popular with the Film Planners!

PRESENTATION 74%
Alter team colours, match length, three skill levels and save league option.

GRAPHICS 70%
The colour and texture of pitches vary nicely, the players look okay and move quickly but there's nothing outstanding.

SOUND 69%
Choice of a very dull soundtrack or above average FX.

HOOKABILITY 74%
Very easy to get into, with the lower computer teams providing weak opposition.

LASTABILITY 63%
Challenging league, but could be repetitive playing solo.

OVERALL 70%

More dunk than slam.

● Ocean, Amiga £24.99

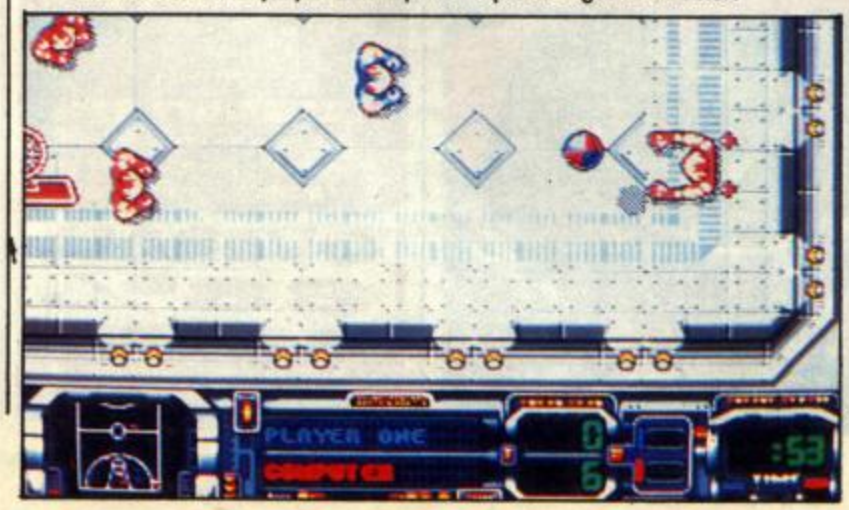
PLOTTING

Why the strange title I've no idea — it has no plot! But as it's a puzzle game it doesn't really matter...

The screen's split vertically to allow simultaneous two-player action; they can work through the levels independently or compete against each other. If you're using the left half, an array of square tiles lies in the bottom right of your area. You steer a potato-like creature that can spit a tile at the array, either directly from the side or by rebounding off the steps above. If it hits another tile (or row of tiles) of the same design it erases it, throwing out the next different design. The aim is to reduce the number of tiles to a set number to progress to the next level. If it's not possible to hit a tile of the same design, one of three missed shots is used up.

Later levels are complicated by awkward arrangements of steps and pipes. A construction kit allows tiles, steps and pipes to be arranged as desired.

★ Simultaneous two-player action pits one potato against another!





My first reaction to *Plotting* was 'Huh?', but when I'd got the gist I realised what a simple and readily playable puzzle game it is. Unfortunately, unless you tread very carefully and push your luck with the time limit, you often can't see why it's game over until it's too late; tile, step and pipe arrangements can be highly deceptive. It's for this reason that the construction kit isn't very useful. Unless you try to work it out it's easy to create levels that are impossible to complete.



Like Warren, I initially found *Plotting* confusing. Even now it's still just as hard to master and ultimately very repetitive. Still, I found it fairly addictive for a while, and the two-player challenge option adds a bit of extra excitement. I'm not sure about the minimalistic graphics and ear-twisting music though. And although it's a nice little puzzle game *Plotting* can't justify its £25 price tag.

PRESENTATION 86%
Two-player independent and competition game modes, help screen and construction kit.

GRAPHICS 62%
Simplistic tiles and passable sprite.

SOUND 44%
Irritating music but pleasant, functional effects.

HOOKABILITY 68%
Confusing at first, but easily grasped with a little perseverance.

LASTABILITY 74%
Plentiful pre-set levels but the construction kit won't appeal to some.

OVERALL 69%

An intriguing puzzle concept of dubious lasting interest.

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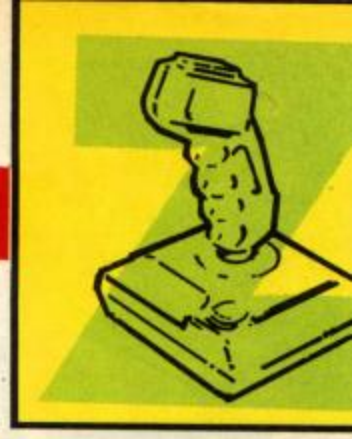
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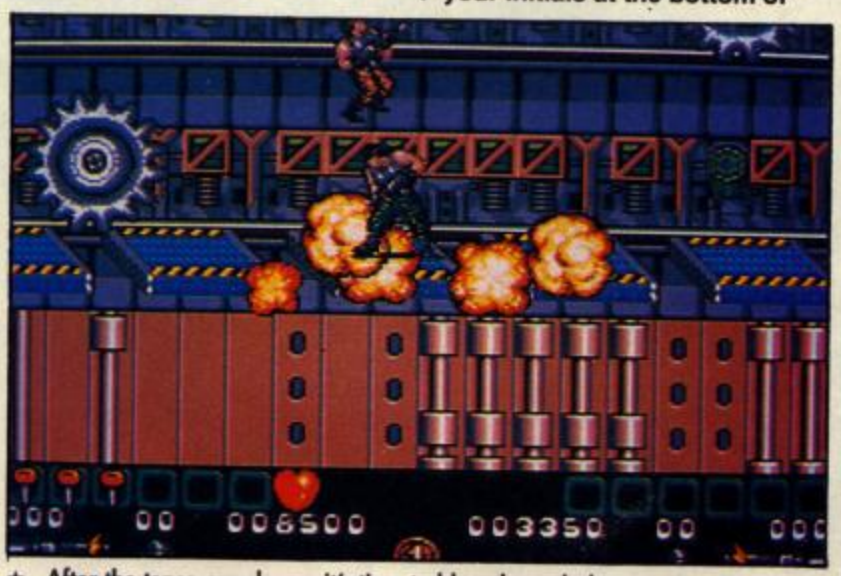
● **Ocean, Amiga £24.99**

midnight RESISTANCE

Your grandad may be getting on a bit, but he's not senile — he's actually a famous scientist. This may seem a desirable state of affairs but it has its disadvantages: not many old fogies get kidnapped, especially by a load of megalomaniacs (Ed-types) led by a ruthless Commissar. Yep, they're after your grandpa's superior weapon research to aid their quest for world domination — and for extra security they've napped the rest of your family too.

This is terrible! Whatever will you do without Auntie Mo's home-made loganberry jam, or Uncle Bob's witty after-dinner anecdotes? Something's got to be done, so perhaps it's just as well you're a trigger-happy vigilante with an uncanny resemblance to Rambo.

Nine multi-directionally scrolling levels stand between you and your folks, each packed with gun-toting baddies and the odd tank. An athletic type, you can dodge their bullets by jumping and crawling (sounds like a sycophant to me — Ed). You can even rotate your gun to shoot guys above, below and behind you. When shot, some enemies leave behind a key. These are used in the end-of-level weapon rooms to buy new guns such as a flamethrower, three-way-fire and a shotgun. You can also buy ammo for these special weapons, and super weapons such as Homing Missiles and Nitro super-explosive which are activated by pressing 'shift'. If you lose all your lives, any keys or weapons you've collected are dropped. After entering your initials at the bottom of the screen, you can use one of the shared continue-plays. The keys and weapons can be picked up then — unless your partner has nabbed them.



★ After the tense crawlways it's time to blast through the conveyor belts and confront a supertank.



I enjoyed the coin-op when it first appeared, while it wasn't particularly novel there was plenty of variety and action. It's Special FX maintaining high standards with this very playable game. The graphics are a little washed out, but otherwise very close to the arcade which is packed with novel opponents and situations, with plenty of vertical as well as horizontal scrolling. I particularly like the huge jetfighters which make lethal bombing runs. Each level is completely different from the one before, and learning all the different attack patterns is really good fun. This is highly playable game and shows Special FX are in top form for their upcoming Amiga *RoboCop II*!



After the top-notch Amiga *Shadow Warriors*, Ocean slip into even higher gear with this Special FX version of the Data East blast-'em-up. I can honestly say I wasn't that keen on it from preview shots — this type of game is very familiar — but it's immensely good fun to play. The men move quickly and the rotating fire action works surprisingly well. Add-on weapons are varied and very useful, while dropping them when you die is both novel and fair — watch out for your 'partner' stealing your weapon before you 'continue-play'. All this hardware is only half the fun, the other half is the terrifically varied nine levels. Crawling down narrow passages, blasting through conveyor belts, strolling in the countryside and invading a battleship are just some of the coming attractions. The end-of-level baddies are great too, ranging from tanks to massive buzzsaws (!) and a massive head. In short, a first class conversion of a superb coin-op.

★ Armed with a triple-fire machine gun and flamethrower the bros should make short work of this tank.



amiga

PRESENTATION 79%
Music/soundtrack choice, five shared continue-plays, excellent two-player mode but no start-up sequence.

GRAPHICS 89%
A bit pale, but very varied and the attention to detail becomes ever more apparent the more you play.

SOUND 76%
Choice of a rousing and varied soundtrack or some good FX.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Instantly playable, instantly compulsive in either single or double-player mode. A real coin-op feel.

LASTABILITY 89%
Nine levels of dramatically varying gameplay.

OVERALL 89%

Ocean keep getting better. Excellent coin-op action.



THE GOLD OF THE AZTECS

Bret Conrad is another one of those Vietnam vets with a slight psychological problem. Apparently when bullets fly 'I kind of lose control' — a bit of a drawback in a Special Forces commando. His latest adventure begins in the USA: bored and penniless Conrad is staying with his great uncle Milo. Unfortunately the tension of living with a maniac who goes into a fit at the slightest noise gets to old Milo and he croaks. Bret is a little upset at this, but with the apartment free it's a great opportunity to throw a party. A few days later Bret turns the apartment upside down in search of cash. Instead he finds some secret notes behind a framed Playmate picture!

Apparently Milo was really interested in the Aztecs and had uncovered the story of Don Juan, not the famous seducer of legend but rather a Spanish nobleman who invaded Mexico in 1615. He was as much a psychopath as Conrad, and slaughtered hundreds of natives on his way to a tomb dedicated to the god Quetzacoatl. The tomb was brimming with treasure, but Don Juan's forces were decimated by a native attack and only he survived to tell the tale. Now Conrad's got a map and he's not hanging about, a vet friend promptly flies him into South America.

Conrad's quest is a flickscreen arcade adventure. He can walk, jump, make long somersaulting jumps, duck, climb ladders and ropes. He's also armed with a Browning pistol, drawn with a short tap on the firebutton; you can then swing the gun in an arc. Other actions are accessed via the space bar: the icons at the bottom of the screen show the Gun option, Reload (usually automatic, but you might want to top up before nasty screens), Machete (hack at enemies at close range) and Pull Lever. There are also four special options which become available at certain places in the game.

Also at the screen base is the status bar, which shows treasure collected, bullets remaining in the gun, lives and percentage completed.





Very reminiscent of *Barbarian* this one, not just because of the wealth of graphic detail but also the rather jerky animation and sluggish movement of the hero. Things happen a lot faster than it takes to move out of the way or to get your gun out and blast the approaching danger. I'm sure with time you can get somewhere in it but to be honest I was driven up the wall with frustration. It requires far too much precision to make for satisfying gameplay. Yeah, it's worth a look for the excellent and highly varied graphics, good tunes and all-round gloss but you'll need quite a bit of patience to stick with it.



This is the world's first 'Computer Aided Game' — 'Without the aid of computers, this product would not exist.' Fairly unique for a computer game that, isn't it?! More impressive is the claim that the game includes 4 Megabytes crammed onto two disks, 7,000 frames of animation and 140 different hero actions with 1500 frames of hero animation. So it's rather amazing he moves so slowly and jerkily. The graphics are generally very good, but you'd expect that of a flickscreen game and everything acts as if it's in treacle with even the bullets taking their time to move. Of course, Psygnosis's *Barbarian* suffered from the same problem and was still extremely playable. Each screen was a puzzle requiring deft use of the icon system to beat. *Gold* provides the same feel of slow, but extremely tough and unforgiving gameplay which demands both careful thought and very fast reactions. Later levels provide plenty of graphic variety and fresh puzzles so it rewards persistence. Without a save game it would be much too frustrating, as it is this is well worth considering for *Barbarian* fans.

PRESENTATION 86%
Music/sound FX on/off, tiny preview of next game, disk save option, in-game map, gruesome death sequence and parachuting intro.

GRAPHICS 84%
Varied, detailed and imaginative but also sluggish and flickscreen.

SOUND 83%
Good sound FX and a nice, moody soundtrack.

HOOKABILITY 69%
It starts off very tough indeed with sluggish control responses and very tough traps...

LASTABILITY 81%
...but there's a big challenge made enjoyable by a save/load option. Lots of graphical variety rewards perseverance.

OVERALL 79%
An extremely demanding game where every screen is packed with traps.

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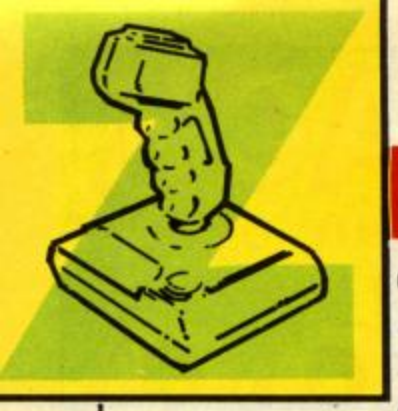
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A64

BACK TO THE FUTURE 2



The film is a non-stop showcase of ILM's special effects genius, a rollercoaster trip which was always going to test programming skills. Imageworks have made a good stab at the plot and the game structure is imaginative, combining fast-moving skateboarding, a beat-'em-up and puzzle games. The skateboarding is a fairly routine *Metrocross* variant. Rescuing Jennifer is a tough logic puzzle which can be frustrating, while the beat-'em-up section is disappointingly limited — especially on the C64. The tile puzzle is better, if unoriginal, while the final skateboard scene adds little new to the original apart from different graphics.



Suffering a bit of timewarp itself, *Back To The Future II* arrives just in time for the arrival of *III*. Thankfully the brain-spinning plot has undergone a bit of simplification in its binary conversion, so it all makes perfect sense now...

The Doc has seen the future, and it doesn't work. Not for Marty it doesn't, he's become unemployed and his son — Marty Jnr — has been arrested for petty crime. So when the Doc returns to 1985, both Marty and Jennifer (his wife to be) jump into the De Lorean to put things to rights.

The first level takes place in October 2015: Marty goes to the Cafe 80s to prevent Marty Jnr getting involved with the evil Griff and his street gang. The game begins with Marty zipping along on his hoverboard through the horizontally scrolling city with the gang in hot pursuit. Cars zip by which Marty can catch a quick lift on. Marty can also punch gang members, jump over manholes and gratings, as well as picking up bonus objects for acceleration and extra energy.

The next level (shown from overhead) is the scene where Jennifer has been taken to her future home by the police; if she meets herself a disastrous time paradox is caused. You can't control Jennifer, only open certain doors for her to move through. It's an arcade logic puzzle against the clock.

Level three takes place in alternate 1985, where multimillionaire Biff (Griff's grandfather) dominates the town. In a horizontally scrolling beat-'em-up, Marty has to get back to the De Lorean to fix things. Some of the baddies carry weapons, which you can take and use.

After all that physical exertion, level four presents another brain-strainer. This is where Marty sees himself playing in the band in 1955 in the first *Back To The Future*! The scene is presented on a number of tiles, which are promptly shuffled. You must move the tiles around to recreate the original image before time runs out...

The final level is much the same as the first, only it's set in 1955 so the background graphics are different and Marty has a skateboard instead of a hoverboard.



'Marty! You've gotta come back with me! It's the programmers of this movie licence!' Yeah, well it's what Doc *should* say, because travelling back in time to make Imageworks redesign and reprogram this game seems like a very good idea to me. True, there are five sections but the first is enough to put you off. In theory it's an interesting cross between *Metrocross* and *Paperboy*, but in practice energy is lost quickly, cars appear out of nowhere and new lives begin at the start of the level. The C64 version isn't quite as bad but has naff expanded sprites, as opposed to the decidedly ST-ish Amiga version. Perseverance may save the day for some, other levels using simple game designs to inject variety.

★ Time stands still as Marty rides his hoverboard! (Amiga)



64

PRESENTATION 80%
Jerky, but nice intro adds another load to a heavily multiload game. Good interlevel screens.

GRAPHICS 59%
Skateboarding has blocky, dated looking sprites but good scroll. Beat-'em-up is poor, while puzzles are okay.

SOUND 63%
A continuous rendition of the movie's main theme.

HOOKABILITY 61%
The first section is one of the most playable, although that isn't saying too much.

LASTABILITY 59%
Later levels offer variety, but not much fun.

OVERALL 59%

A disappointing movie conversion.

amiga

PRESENTATION 75%
Nice intro and okay interlevel screens add a quality touch.

GRAPHICS 77%
Lots of detail on the first level makes for an impressive ST-ish game.

SOUND 58%
The movie's main theme is translated into an okay soundtrack.

HOOKABILITY 66%
Difficult first level, but playable.

LASTABILITY 64%
Later levels are a bit more impressive on the Amiga.

OVERALL 64%

An uninspired conversion of a dazzling movie.

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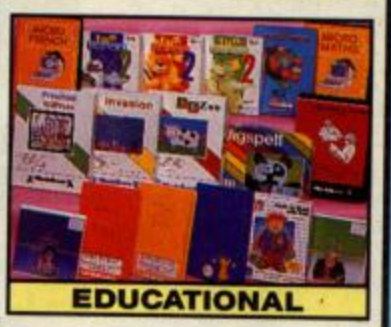
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